The book cover features a decorative border composed of a grid of squares. Each square contains a stylized illustration of a cow, facing right, with various symbols (circles, squares, and lines) above its head. The border is made of light brown paper, while the central text area is a dark brown rectangle.

AN OUTLINE OF INDIAN HISTORY



Dr. A.C. BANERJEE

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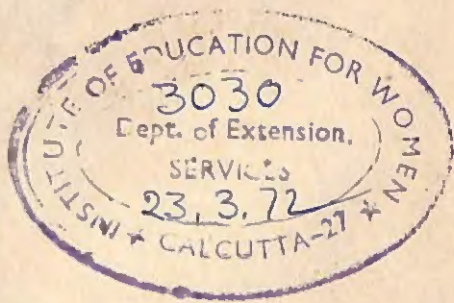
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AN OUTLINE OF INDIAN HISTORY

Written in accordance with the Syllabus for Higher Secondary,
and School Final Examinations : also suitable for equivalent
courses in Indian History.

By

ANIL CHANDRA BANERJEE, M.A., PH.D.
Premchand Roychand Scholar, Guru
Nanak Professor of Indian History
Jadavpur University



A. MUKHERJEE & CO., PRIVATE LTD.
2, Bankim Chatterjee Street, Calcutta-12

Published by :

Niva Mukherjee

Managing Director

A. Mukherjee & Co., Pr. Ltd.

2, Bankim Chatterjee Street,

Calcutta-12

Revised Second Edition, October, 1971

Price : Rs. 10.00 (Rupees Ten) only

Printed by :

Monindra Mohan Basak

Sarada Press

10, Dr. Kartick Bose Street,

Calcutta-9

P R E F A C E

An attempt has been made in the following pages to give a fairly comprehensive outline of Indian history for the benefit of students taking up the Higher Secondary and equivalent courses. Details have been avoided as far as possible, but it is hoped that no essential fact needed for correct understanding of historical trends has been omitted. Maps and illustrations have been added to explain the text. Model questions have been appended with a view to directing the attention of students to the more significant and difficult topics for special study. Indian history is a developing subject, for researches are rescuing fresh facts and adding fresh interpretations. While tentative theories and speculations have no place in text-books, young minds should be brought into contact with new facts and ideas which have secured general acceptance. This principle has been kept in view in preparing the narrative. The author's labour will be amply rewarded if he succeeds in stimulating the interest of his young readers in the study of history.

A. C. Banerjee

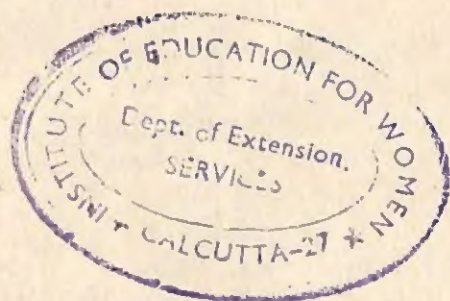
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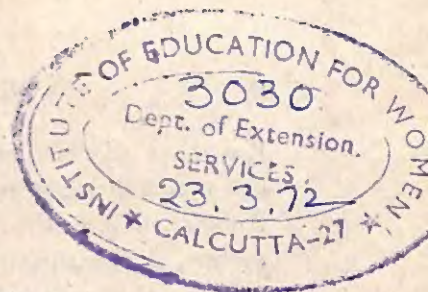
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PART ONE





CHAPTER 1

Geographical Description

Man and his environment : Man and his geographical surroundings are two principal elements of history. Geographical factors largely determine man's character, activities and extent of achievement. In many instances, formation of nations and historical evolution are distinctly influenced by geographical environment. Thus, the ancient Greeks were never able to establish political unity all over Greece because the different parts of the country were separated by mountain ranges. The difficulties of communication between the different regions stood in the way of national unity in the sphere of politics. The geographical position of England, which is surrounded on all sides by sea, encouraged the English nation to take to commerce and navigation by sea. Her powerful navy and world-wide empire were largely the results of her geographical situation. Geographical features have similarly influenced the course of history in India.

Extent of India : India is a sub-continent lying to the south of the continent of Asia. It is the land of the legendary king Bharata. The word "India" comes from the name given to the country by the ancient Greeks. This name derives from the word "Hindu" in the old Persian language. "Hindu" is a distortion of the word "Sindhu" (or Indus).

Nature has generously provided India (including Pakistan) with a well-defined boundary. In the north, north-east and north-west the towering Himalayas and the connected ranges stand as more or less impenetrable barriers. But these inaccessible ranges could not isolate India entirely from the other parts of Asia. The races which through the ages crossed over to India through mountain passes like Khyber, Bolan etc. in the north-west are well known in history. Various races—the Dravidians, Aryans, Persians, Greeks, Sakas, Pallavas,

Kushanas, Huns, Turks, Afghans—entered our country through the north-western mountain passes at different times. The Ahoms entered the Brahmaputra valley through the north-eastern mountain passes.

On the west and the south India faces the sea. Her coastlines are nearly 5000 miles long. These are rough compared to those of Europe ; that is why India's long coastlines provide scope for construction of fewer ports and docks than those of Europe. As a result, the Indian people have not achieved any great success in maritime commerce and overseas empire-building.

Geographical divisions of India : The physical features of India (including Pakistan) divide the country into five main regions :—(1) The Himalayan uplands ; (2) the plains watered by the Indus, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra ; (3) the Central Indian plateau (the region lying east of the land watered by the Indus and the Ganges and north of the Vindhya-Satpura ranges) ; (4) the Deccan plateau (the region in between the Eastern and Western Ghats and the river Krishna) ; and (5) the peninsular region in the 'Far South' extending from the river Krishna to the Indian Ocean.

Kashmir, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan etc. are situated in the Himalayan uplands. The currents of Indian history have left the history of all these areas except Kashmir largely unaffected. From the point of view of the historian, the vast plains watered by the Indus, the Ganges and the Brahmaputra have the greatest importance. It is mainly this region which has seen the evolution of India's political unity and civilization. Politically, the central Indian plateau may also be included within this region. The Deccan, lying south of the Vindhyas, is primarily the land of the Dravidians. But even in ancient times the Aryans extended their political and cultural influence in this area. In historical times the Deccan has repeatedly come under the political sway of North India. But except the Marathas, no other power of the Deccan could for any length of time extend its domain north-

of the Vindhya. The evolution of history in the peninsular region in the 'Far South' is largely different from that of the northern part of the Deccan.

Historical importance of the Himalayas : The Himalayas, the highest mountain range in the world, is of the utmost importance in India's history. This inaccessible mountain range stands as the protecting wall of North India. Due to its position, neither the threat of invasion from the North nor the desire for extending dominion in the lofty hills have influenced India's political life. The Himalayas is the main source of the rivers of North India. It thus has a remarkable influence on India's economy. The Himalayas is inseparably bound up with the religion and culture of India. Speaking from the standpoint of India the great poet Kalidasa described the Himalayas as the "measuring rod of the world."

In fact, the Himalayas and the connected ranges have not been able to keep India entirely isolated from the neighbouring countries. Nepal, though not situated in India, is a part of the Himalayan uplands. There are repeated references to it in Indian historical narratives, chronicles etc. India has a record of long historical association with lands on the other side of its frontier ranges—Tibet, Burma, China, Afghanistan, Central Asia etc. This relation was never restricted to political affairs alone. Commerce and culture also linked India with these lands.

The Vindhya : The Vindhya, with its position more or less at the centre of India, has stood in the way of national unity. Except the more powerful of them, the North Indian kings have never been able to conquer the South and establish an India-wide empire. However, there is no doubt that even in very ancient times Aryan religion and culture penetrated into the South. But in many respects the Dravidian civilization of South India has been able to preserve its separate identity. Had not the Vindhya acted as a barrier, the link between the North and the South would have been firmer.

The Indian Ocean : It has already been stated that the roughness of its coastlines has not allowed India to construct as many ports and docks as in Europe. Still, there is no doubt that like the ancient Greeks and the modern English, the inhabitants of India's coastlines went on voyages in search of commerce. The Hindus used to travel by sea to Burma, Sumatra, Java, Cambodia etc. Some historians think that the Gupta Emperors established their influence over some islands in the Indian Ocean. The navy of Rajendra Chola conquered the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, parts of Burma and Sumatra. It was the existence of a navy which made possible the dominance of Indian kings over Ceylon. The Pandya king Jatavarman Sundara Pandya extended his sway up to the Malayan peninsula by sea. During the reign of Shivaji, the Marathas were attracted to the sea. At one time the Maratha navy dominated the western coast of India.

It will be seen that only the kings of South India tried to extend their dominions and commercial activities over the sea. Being far from the sea, the kingdoms of North India never appreciated the necessity for a navy. During the Mughal period, Indian rulers paid practically no attention to the development of a navy. As the Mughal Empire had no strong navy the European merchants—particularly the Portuguese and the English—were easily able to dominate the Arabian Sea and the Indian Ocean. As a result, the Arab merchants lost their long-existing supremacy in India's external trade to the Portuguese, Dutch, English and French merchants. The failure of the Mughals to build up a strong navy was largely responsible for the establishment of the British Empire in India.

Influence of physical features on Indian history : It has already been stated that everywhere in the world physical features to a large extent determine the course of history. India is no exception. It is hardly possible to have a proper understanding of Indian history without a clear appreciation of the influence exercised by the country's geographical position, climate, rivers, mountains etc.

India is separated from other countries by mountains and seas. Indians have little opportunity for exchange of ideas with their neighbours. That is why they developed a largely self-contained civilization. India's social system and philosophical thought are India's own; she owes nothing to her neighbours in these spheres. If the mountains and the seas had not isolated India, if it were easy to travel from India to countries such as China—then India's civilization might not have become self-contained but would have owed much to India's neighbours. In that case, this civilization might have been richer in variety, but would have lost much of its unique character.

Though the mountains and the seas stood in the way of exchange of ideas, these could not stop invaders from outside. The mountain passes of the north-west were the main gateways to India in ancient and middle ages. Foreign invaders like the Persians, Greeks, Sakas, Huns and Turks entered India at different times through these passes and established their political sway. These conquerors did not rule India from their own countries like the English, but settled permanently in this country, and in course of time were absorbed into the fabric of Indian nationality. Naturally their languages, religions and customs exercised considerable influence on Indian civilization. Thus foreign aggression not only meant loss of political freedom for India; the nature of Indian civilization also underwent changes through contact with foreign rulers and settlers.

It is the riches of India which have repeatedly attracted foreign invaders to this country. Numerous rivers have made this country plentiful in all the bounties of nature. The country is also rich in mineral resources. Almost all the necessities of life have easily been available here. The people of India have, therefore, never been accustomed to a hard struggle for existence. Because one could live and carry on a more or less comfortable existence without working hard, the people of this country gradually became feeble and averse to hard labour. India's climatic condition, also contributed to

such a development. Naturally Indians could not resist foreign aggression. Thus the riches of India indirectly led to foreign invasions and their success. On the other hand, the wealth of the country also produced certain positive results. As the struggle for existence was not so hard, Indians could spare time and energy for literature, philosophy, etc. Had they been compelled to devote themselves exclusively to the wresting of the necessities of life from a thrifty nature, Indian civilization would never have been so rich.

Inside India, the rivers, mountains and deserts stood in the way of political unity. The vastness of India made it difficult to bring the entire country under a single ruler. Had it been a vast plain only without the physical features referred to above, it would, of course, have been easier to unite the country in one empire. The rivers, mountains etc. have divided India into different geographical regions. Independent kingdoms have been established at different times in these different regions due to various reasons. This lack of unity resulting from the peculiar physical features of the country contributed not a little to India's loss of independence, for the Indian kings never presented a united front against invaders from outside.

In ancient times the civilization of India spread to Western Asia, Central Asia, China, Tibet, Burma and the East Indies. This was largely due to India's geographical situation. The influence of Buddhism was felt in Western Asia due to the missionary activities of Asoka. Foreign invasion led to establishment of contact with Central Asia and China; it was during the reign of the Kushanas that Indian civilization found entry into those areas. In Burma and East Indies the spread of Indian civilization was largely due to the sea-faring merchants of India.

Diversity of India : India is a land of infinite variety. Its scenic beauty, its races, languages, religions and cultures present an endless variety woven into the fabric of a composite picture. That India is a land of nature's bounty is mainly due to her numerous rivers. Everywhere in the

world, riverine countries have fertile soil which produces an abundance of crops. The desert of Rajputana provides an example of how the fertility of soil vanishes in the absence of rivers. India does not lack high mountain ranges. It has the highest mountain in the world—the Himalayas. There is no volcano in India but an island in the Bay of Bengal, called Barren Island, has one.

India's diversity is not limited to its scenic beauty. Nobody knows how many races made their abode all over this vast land from time immemorial. Anthropologists who have compared the height, formation of skull, physical traits and the size of the nose of different peoples of India have concluded that the coming together of Aryan, Dravidian, Mongol and various other peoples through the ages has in course of time produced a mixed race in India.

This land of many races naturally has a variety of languages. The language of the Vedic Samhitas is known as "Chhandas". This language, through changes and evolution, became "Sanskrit". Sanskrit was restricted to the upper classes; the common people spoke in the language known as "Prakrit". The Aryan languages of modern India are derived from Prakrit. The principal languages among these are Hindi, Bengali, Assamese, Oriya, Rajasthani, Punjabi, Sindhi, Kashmiri, Marathi and Gujarati. During the Muslim period the mixture of Hindi with Persian produced a composite language called Urdu. In South India the Dravidian languages are current. Of these, the four principal languages are Tamil, Telegu, Malayalam and Kanarese. Some of the languages of the original inhabitants of India still continue to be used among the primitive and aboriginal peoples in forests and mountains. According to census figures, India has more than 225 languages.

This land of diversity is the land of many religions. Of these, Hinduism has the largest number of devotees. Buddhism, which originated in this country and spread all over Asia, has now practically no follower here. There are only a few thousand Buddhists in the Ladak area of Kashmir and the Chittagong area of East Pakistan. Jainism has followers in Rajasthan and

Gujarat. The religion of the Sikhs has not spread beyond the Punjab. All these three religions are virtually off-shoots of Hinduism. Four hundred thousand Muslims live in the Indian Union. The Hindus number nearly one hundred thousand in East Pakistan. A very small fraction of the vast population of this country is fire-worshipper. This religion is known as Zoroastrianism. Some backward people in India's hilly regions are spirit-worshippers.

Fundamental unity of India: India has no lack of diversity, but the basic spirit which underlies this variety is India's own.

The diversity in India's physical features has made political unity difficult, but not impossible, of achievement. From the earliest times this vast land stretching from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin has been known under one name. It was never a conglomeration of countries with their separate entities within a particular geographical area, as Europe was and is. The rivers and mountains of India have not been able to isolate entirely one part of India from another. There have never been impassable barriers to movement from one region of the country to another. At the very beginning of Indian civilization the Aryans had made arrangements for movement from the Punjab to Bengal and the Deccan. Modern methods of transportation have now made the unity underlying India's diversity more apparent.

The Indian nation is admittedly a product of the mixture of many races, but nowhere in the world is there a pure race now. In the United States, people of many racial stocks have come together and formed a single nation. It is nothing unusual to find different races and languages within the boundaries of a single state. In Soviet Russia various races and religions are living together in unity. Switzerland is a very small country. There are three languages there, but this has not impaired national unity. There is no reason why the use of ten or twelve major languages in India should make national unity impossible of achievement.

That it is not impossible to unite India politically has been

proved time and again. In the hoary past the Aryan sages had visions of Indian unity. In the historical period this noble vision was transformed into reality by the Maurya, Gupta, Khalji, Tughluk and Mughal emperors. The empires of ancient and middle ages did not last long for a variety of reasons. In the absence of modern facilities for communication it was difficult to administer the distant areas of the empire from one capital. Naturally, therefore, it was difficult to keep an empire intact for any great length of time. Such difficulties hardly arise in the modern period. British rule covering one hundred and fifty years established unity on a firm footing. Events have disrupted that unity. India was partitioned in 1947 and two independent and separate states have come into existence.

• In Indian history cultural rather than political unity is of greater importance. The people of various races and religions who have made this country their home in course of ages have influenced each other in many respects. The language, dress, customs, food habits, even the religion of the Hindus bear clear traces of Islamic influence. Similarly Islam in India has also been influenced by Hinduism. The civilization that has come into being through interchange of ideas across the centuries between the Hindus and the Muslims is neither fully Hindu nor fully Islamic in character. It is Indian civilization, a composite product. This civilization is the heritage of all Indians, irrespective of religion.

Model Questions :

1. Estimate the influence of the geography of India on the history of the country.
2. "India offers unity in diversity".—Explain.

CHAPTER 2

Sources of Indian History

Those who write history have to depend on various sources. Let us suppose you want to know something about the reign of Asoka. In that case you will have to read the inscriptions of Asoka; you will then have some idea of what happened when he was the emperor of Magadha, how he administered his empire and what steps he took to preach his religion. In the language of the historians, these inscriptions are source materials for the history of Asoka's time.

Different periods may have different types of source materials. The main sources of history for Akbar's reign are some books written in Persian. For the history of the British period you will have to consult official documents. Historians have collected and used materials from a variety of sources to give us a picture of the history of our land.

Archaeological sources : We have no systematic history of India's ancient past. For an insight into the history of that age we depend mainly on various archaeological sources. That is why archaeological excavations play a very important part in providing us with a glimpse of ancient Indian history. The excavations at Mohenjodaro and Harappa have given us interesting and useful information about the pre-historic Indus civilization. The digging in those places was undertaken in the hope of discovering some ruins connected with Buddhism. At that time nobody had any idea about any civilization preceding the Vedic Age. The excavations conducted at Mohenjo-daro by Rakhaldas Banerjee, a noted historian of Bengal, led to the discovery of prehistoric ruins instead of the expected remains of Buddhism. These excavations opened up a hitherto unknown chapter in the history of India's dim past. Excavations at

various other sites—centres of ancient Indian civilization such as Sanchi, Nalanda, Taxila—have rescued from oblivion some rich periods of ancient Indian history.

Inscriptions as recorded on rocks, pillars, brass plates etc. : Among the archaeological sources inscriptions recorded on rocks, pillars, brass plates etc. provide the more important materials. Inscriptions carved on rocks are less numerous than those carved on brass plates. Asoka's major rock edicts number 14. Besides, there are minor rock edicts and pillar inscriptions of Asoka. These inscriptions on rocks and pillars can still be seen at different places in India and Pakistan. The

language used in these records was that spoken by the common people of that time. Asoka used the Brahmi and Kharosthi scripts current during his age. Scholars have been able to decipher these scripts and explain the meaning of the Asokan inscriptions. This work was initiated by James Prinsep, an officer of the East India Company. In 1837 he was able to read the Brahmi script used in the rock edicts of Asoka. Besides Asoka, many other rulers caused official documents, records of donations etc. to be inscribed on rocks. After Asoka the language used for the purpose was mainly Sanskrit. The Saka King, Rudradaman, caused an inscription in Sanskrit to be recorded on a rock at Junagadh in Saurashtra (Western India).

In ancient India inscriptions used to be recorded on pillars also. We have a few pillar inscriptions of Asoka. Harishena's poetic eulogy of the achievements of Samudragupta, the great Gupta emperor, was inscribed on a pillar and is now known as the Allahabad Pillar Inscription.

Now-a-days transactions in land and other immovable properties are recorded in documents written on paper which are duly registered. In ancient times brass plates were used for such purpose instead of paper. The details of the transactions used to be inscribed on brass plates and kept in careful custody. Hundreds of such inscriptions on brass plates—executed by

kings, officials and private persons—have been found in different parts of India. Not infrequently do these contain valuable information regarding royal lineage, names of kings, length of their reign, extent of their kingdoms, causes and results of wars, etc.

Coins : Another major source of ancient Indian history is royal coinages. Coins frequently mention the name and period of reign of a king. Of course, there are also coins which contain no such information. Coins mainly provide the materials in respect of the history of the Greek and Saka kings of north-western India. Sometimes the images carved on the coins throw some light, though indirectly, on the nature of administration and the religious beliefs of kings. For example, the coins of some Kushana kings have an ox carved on them. The ox, as we know, is the carrier of Siva. It may, therefore, be reasonably conjectured that those kings were worshippers of Siva. Some coins of Samudragupta have an image of the emperor playing on a *veena* (harp). This indicates that he had at least some skill in instrumental music. If coins of a particular king are discovered in large numbers in a particular region, it will not be wrong to conclude that his dominions included that particular region.

Ancient Indian literature : Scholars in search of India's past depend very much on the materials furnished by Sanskrit and Pali literatures. The literature of the Vedic Age is the main source of information for a history of that age, as no inscriptions, whether inscribed on rock or pillar or brass plate, pertaining to that remote past have been found.

Sanskrit, Pali For a knowledge of Buddhism, we must rely first on Pali and then on Sanskrit literature. Even a book which cannot in any sense be regarded as historical can provide materials for history. Panini's grammar and Patanjali's *Mahabhasya* contain facts which have a bearing on history.

Though the literature in Sanskrit is as vast as it is rich, unfortunately there are very few Sanskrit works on history. Possibly the minds of the scholars of those days were not

history-oriented. The court poet of emperor Harshavardhana, Banabhatta, who was the author of *Kadamvari*, wrote *Harshacharita* in Sanskrit prose. This work allows us a glimpse into the events of Harsha's reign. The *Rajatarangini* of Kalhana is a chronicle of Kashmir written in the 12th century A. D. in Sanskrit verse. Other notable Sanskrit works

on history include Bilhana's *Vikramanka-devacharita* and Sandhyakarnandi's *Ramacharita*. In Prakrit we have *Gaudavaho* of Vakpati.

Some of the eighteen *Puranas* contain the dynastic histories of the ancient kings and their achievements. The religious and other works of the Buddhists and Jains also have materials of interest to historians. The *Jatakas* written in Pali throw light on the social customs and administrative systems during the period of the ascendancy of Buddhism.

Writings of foreigners : Writers and travellers from many lands have left accounts of India through the ages. Herodotus, the Greek historian, refers to the Persian conquest of north-western India. It must be mentioned that he never came to India ; his account was based on hearsay. Megasthenes, who had been the Greek representative at the court of Chandragupta Maurya for a long time, wrote an account of India. This work is no longer extant, but has survived partially in the form of quotations by later authors. Even in this form, it is indispensable for a history of the Maurya period. The *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* by an unknown Greek navigator gives an account of India's commercial links with foreign lands.

After the Greeks, the next in importance are the Chinese travellers. Fa-hien came to India during the reign of Chandragupta II of the Gupta dynasty and Hiuen-Tsang at the time of Harshavardhana.

Both of them have left contemporary accounts of the Indian scene and these are our indispensable historical guides for the periods concerned.

From the seventh century A. D. onwards, Muslim travellers began to pay visits to India from Arabia as also

from other Muslim countries. We find information of a varied nature in the accounts left by some Arab merchants.

The great scholar Al-Biruni came to India with Sultan Mahmud at the time of the latter's invasion of India. In order to have an insight into the religious and other aspects of Hindu society he took great pains to learn Sanskrit. His work on India gives a detailed account of the social and educational systems, the religious practices and customs of the Hindus of the 11th century.

Historical materials for the Muslim period: For information relating to the Muslim period historians depend mainly on works written in Persian. The Muslim scholars had far more sense of history than their Hindu counterparts. The result was the production of a large number of historical works in Persian. Minhaj-ud-din and Zia-ud-din Barani have written histories of the Slave Sultans of Delhi. The poetical compositions of Amir Khusrau throw light on history. As source materials for the history of the Mughal period we may refer particularly to the historical works of Abul Fazl, Badauni, Firistha, Khafi Khan and others. Abul Fazl was a friend of Akbar. He was a versatile scholar of high calibre. His *Ain-i-Akbari* describes in detail the administrative system of Akbar. Khafi Khan is an assumed name which the writer used so as not to incur the displeasure of Aurangzeb.

The rulers of Delhi as well as the provincial governors were involved in long and intermittent struggles with the Rajputs, Marathas and Sikhs. The books written in Rajasthani, Marathi and Gurumukhi provide us with much information about these struggles. Babur, the founder of the Mughal empire in India, wrote his "memoirs" in Turki. It was later translated into Persian. It is very interesting and pleasant reading.

It has also considerable merit as a source of history. We may also mention the "memoirs" of Jahangir in this connection. The ladies of the Mughal imperial dynasty also used to compose "memoirs."

Rajasthani,
Marathi and
Gurumukhi
sources.

Memoirs

Some European travellers visited India during the Mughal period and wrote books about the internal condition of this country. The first English traveller, Ralph Fitch, came over here at the time of Akbar. During the reign of Jahangir we have Hawkins and Sir Thomas Roe, who represented James I, king of England, at the court of Jahangir. The Frenchmen Tavernier and Bernier paid their visits when Shah Jahan was the emperor at Delhi. The Italian traveller, Manucci, spent a long period in this country at the time of Aurangzeb. All of them wrote accounts which are extremely valuable from the point of view of the history of the Mughal period.

Inscriptions and coins also contribute substantially to the building up of the history of the Muslim period.

Sources of history of the British period : Official documents are the main sources of information about the British period. These are mostly preserved in the National Archives of India at Delhi. At present almost all States have local Record Offices. Official documents relating to these States are kept very carefully in these Record Offices. Only a small fraction of the official papers pertaining to the British period has seen the light of the day in print ; the rest remain unpublished. Besides such papers, the memoirs of the British rulers and generals and the writings of contemporary authors provide materials for history of the British period.

Model Question :

1. Give a critical account of the sources of ancient Indian history .
-

from other Muslim countries. We find information of a varied nature in the accounts left by some Arab merchants.

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Rajasthani,
Marathi and
Gurumukhi
sources.

Memoirs

Some European travellers visited India during the Mughal period and wrote books about the internal condition of this country. The first English traveller, Ralph Fitch, came over here at the time of Akbar. During the reign of Jahangir we have Hawkins and Sir Thomas Roe, who represented James I, king of England, at the court of Jahangir. The Frenchmen Tavernier and Bernier paid their visits when Shah Jahan was the emperor at Delhi. The Italian traveller, Manucci, spent a long period in this country at the time of Aurangzeb. All of them wrote accounts which are extremely valuable from the point of view of the history of the Mughal period.

Inscriptions and coins also contribute substantially to the building up of the history of the Muslim period.

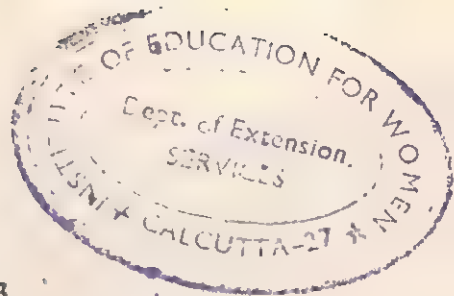
Sources of history of the British period : Official documents are the main sources of information about the British period. These are mostly preserved in the National Archives of India at Delhi. At present almost all States have local Record Offices. Official documents relating to these States are kept very carefully in these Record Offices. Only a small fraction of the official papers pertaining to the British period has seen the light of the day in print ; the rest remain unpublished. Besides such papers, the memoirs of the British rulers and generals and the writings of contemporary authors provide materials for history of the British period.

Model Question :

1. Give a critical account of the sources of ancient Indian history .
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Ruins of the Bath at Mohenjo-Daro (Pt. I, p. 18)



CHAPTER 3

Ancient Civilization of the Indus Valley

Our primitive ancestors killed animals for food and also as a measure of self-protection. For this purpose they used stone implements. That period in history is

Stone Age known as the Stone Age. The Copper Age
Copper Age succeeded the Stone Age in North India.

By that time people had learnt to use copper implements. The use of iron was still not known; it came into use in the succeeding Iron Age in North India.

Discovery of Indus Valley Civilization: Various archaeological finds, characteristic of the Copper Age, in the Indus valley fifty years ago first revealed to us the existence of a great civilization in that area in the pre-historic age. This was the result of excavations at Mohenjo-daro in Sind and Harappa in the Punjab. Both these sites now belong to

Archaeological discoveries in the Indus Valley Pakistan. Rakhaldas Banerjee, an archaeologist from Bengal, began these excavations. Later on the excavations carried on for

several years under the direction of Sir John Marshall, then head of the Archaeological Survey of India, gave us priceless treasures of this most ancient chapter of our country's history.

The discovery of the Indus Valley civilization threw light on a hitherto unknown period of Indian history and is thus an epoch-making event in the field of historical

India's ancient past

research. Till this discovery historians were of the opinion that civilization dawned in India

with the entry of the Aryans into this country about 2000 B. C.

But the excavations have proved that a civilized people lived in the Indus valley even more than three thousand years before the birth of Christ.

The civilization of the Indus valley preceded the Iron Age and was most probably pre-Vedic. We have evidence of the

existence of Mohenjo-daro during the period 3250-2750 B. C. This very ancient civilization stands on a par with the earliest civilizations in history—Egyptian, West Asian and Chinese.

Unfortunately it has not yet been possible to decipher the script of the records inscribed on the seals found at Mohenjo-daro. Our knowledge of this brilliant civilization is, therefore, still incomplete. During the last few years excavations at many sites in Punjab (India), Gujarat and the valley of the Narmada have proved that the Indus civilization was not confined to the Indus valley but extended to vast stretches on the east, west and south of that valley.

Urban civilization : The Indus civilization was urban in nature. At Mohenjo-daro and Harappa the ruins attest to the existence of large cities. The city of Mohenjo-daro was built and destroyed several times. This was possibly due mainly to the severe floods in the Indus river.

City-building Mohenjo-daro was quite big in extent. The ruins of houses, baths and municipal halls bear eloquent testimony to the great advances in the art of building. The houses were built of bricks. One large bath was 180 ft. in length and 108 ft. in width. The bath was surrounded by thick walls and had a very large tank for purposes of swimming. Water was let into the tank from a well by its side. Compared to modern baths, this ancient bath at Mohenjo-daro was in no way less comfortable. The aristocrats lived in two-storied houses. The ground floor had the servants' quarters and the kitchen. The master of the house occupied the upper story with his family. Wide, straight and parallel streets were laid according to a definite plan. By the side of the streets ran the drains. There was efficient arrangement for flow of rain-water from the roof-tops to the ground below. Mohenjo-daro was the oldest planned city of the world and it is doubtful whether any other contemporary people were as great experts in city-building as the people of the Indus valley.

Mode of living : The inhabitants of the Indus valley

enjoyed the blessings of an advanced stage of urban life.

Food Their menu included fish and meat. Wheat, barley, dates and milk were items of food and drink. The remains of food found in the soil bear testimony to this. Clothes made of cotton and silk were used. Articles of daily use included fine domestic utensils . pottery, utensils made of copper, silver and china clay, ivory needle and comb and knives, axes etc. made of copper and

Ornaments bronze. The use of iron was evidently not known, for no iron implements have been found. Gold, silver, ivory and precious stones were used for manufacture of ornaments. The toys and figures made of various materials afford us glimpses into the life



Mohenjo-daro Seal

of that period. Dancing was known to women. The men used to keep beards, but shave off the moustaches. The weapons found include axes, knives, spears etc., but not swords. These were made of copper and bronze; weapons made of stone have also been found. The towns used to be surrounded by walls, which



Harappa Seal

probably served as barriers against enemies and floods. The Mohenjo-daro ruins have yielded evidence of the existence of such animals as ox, cow, buffalo, sheep, camel, elephant and dog. It is doubtful whether horse was known.

Economy : In an urbanized civilization the economy mainly centres round trade and commerce. The seals and

other materials found at Mohenjo-daro testify to the existence of trade and commerce, both inland and maritime, between the peoples of the Indus valley and the Tigris-Euphrates basin in West Asia. The imports into the Indus valley included tin, copper and precious stones. The people of the Indus valley were skilled in varied industrial techniques. The potter, the carpenter, the goldsmith, the mason—all these excelled in their respective occupations. The other means of livelihood were agricultural and pastoral. Agriculture had to be developed considerably, so as to cater to the needs of the



Broken human figures
Mohenjo-daro

densely populated cities. The main products included wheat, cotton, etc.

Art : The works of sculpture and painting that the artists of Mohenjo-daro have left for us attest to their incomparable skill and artistry. The ox and other animals carved on the

seals are so lifelike that it is difficult to find their parallel in ancient art. China-clay utensils of the period bear paintings of leaves, flowers, birds, deer, etc. Lovers of art are full of admiration for the refinement and delicacy of the sculptured human figures found at Mohenjo-daro. It is a matter of great regret that most of the figures that have been dug out are found to be headless and with some limbs broken. A few fine stone figures have been discovered at Harappa.

Religion : Scholars have not yet found it possible to come to any agreed conclusion regarding the religion practised at Mohenjo-daro. Perhaps temples for housing the gods were not yet in vogue. The worship of the mother-goddess was current. This seems to establish a link between the Indus civilization and Western Asia where worship of the mother-goddess was prevalent. An image of a god found at Mohenjo-daro is presumed to be that of Siva. The ox and the banyan tree amongst others were objects of worship. Available evidence also points to the phallic worship and the practice of Yoga. Dead bodies were sometimes cremated and sometimes buried. The religion of the Indus valley is distinctly related to modern Hinduism.

Civilizations of the Indus Valley and Western Asia :

In order to form an idea about the Indus valley civilization we must know something about the ancient civilizations of Western Asia. Just as the Indus civilization developed in the valley of the Indus, the civilization of Egypt was born in the Nile valley and that of Western Asia in the valley of the Tigris and the Euphrates. If we apply the scale of time, we shall find that the civilization of Egypt is the oldest, closely followed by that of the valley of Tigris-Euphrates, which had its political epicentre first at Babylon and then at Nineveh (in Assyria). Like the civilization of the Indus valley, that of Babylon and Assyria was also predominantly urban in nature. The prosperous and populous cities of Western Asia had their counterparts at Mohenjo-daro and

Harappa. Western Asia and the Indus valley were linked not by commerce alone; there was also exchange of ideas. After the fall of Assyria, Western Asia was brought under the sway of the Persian Empire.

Model Question :

1. Give a brief account of the Indus Valley civilization..

CHAPTER 4

The Aryan Civilization

Pre-Aryan India : It is not known if any part of India other than the Indus valley was in occupation of any civilized people before the advent of the Aryans. There is no doubt that the people known as Dravidians were civilized as compared to other aboriginal inhabitants of India. The Dravidians possibly entered India through Baluchistan and the north-western mountain passes. With the coming of the Aryans, they were gradually driven away from North India and finally settled down in the Deccan. The Tamil, Telegu and Malayalam-speaking inhabitants of the South are considered to be the descendants of the Dravidians.

Coming of Aryans : A majority of historians are of opinion that the Aryans were not original inhabitants of India, but entered this country from somewhere outside India. It has not yet been established with any degree of certainty where the Aryans originally came from. That they came to India from somewhere in Central Asia is the view held by many. Others think that the Aryans possibly had their original homeland either in Southern Russia, or Austria-Hungary or North Europe. All these differing viewpoints are based on the study of linguistic and geographical factors.

The Aryans established themselves in north-western India.

probably about 2000 B. C. We do not know why they left their original home and migrated to India. Perhaps lack of space and scarcity of food due to increase in population and climatic changes were the reasons.

Expansion of Aryans in India : Wherever their original home might have been, there is no doubt that they crossed into India through the north-western mountain passes. The first Aryan settlement was established in *Sapta Sindhu* (the land of the seven rivers) —the area from Kabul in Afghanistan to Thaneswar in Punjab (India). The Aryan settlements were confined to Afghanistan, the (undivided, pre-partition) Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province at the time of the composition of the Rig Veda. There was a long struggle between the advancing Aryans and the original non-Aryan inhabitants of these regions.

In the Rig Veda the non-Aryans have been referred to as *Dasas* or *Dasyus*. They had dark skin and were snub-nosed. As they were no believers in the religion of the Aryans, they used to create trouble during Aryan religious ceremonies. They were powerful; the Rig Veda mentions cities and forts built by them. Ultimately the clash between the two peoples resulted in a permanent victory for the Aryans. Many among the defeated non-Aryans fled to mountains and jungles. Some, however, became subservient to the Aryans and occupied an inferior position within the Aryan society. Many of the primitive peoples residing in modern India's mountains and forests are descendants of the non-Aryans vanquished by the Aryans.

Towards the close of the Vedic age the Aryan settlements gradually spread to the east. The Punjab lost in importance by and by. The Aryans occupied Kurukshetra (modern Delhi region), Kosala (present Ayodhya in U. P.), Videha (North Bihar), Magadha (South Bihar), etc.

Aryan migration to India

Aryan settlement during the period of Rig Veda

Struggle with the non-Aryans

Fate of non-Aryans

Extent of Aryan occupation at the close of Vedic Age :
(1) Northern India

The Aryan influence had already spread to the Deccan by the end of the Vedic age. The literature of this period mentions such non-Aryans of the Deccan as the Andhras, Pulindas and Savaras. The Andhras resided in the valleys of the Godavari and the Krishna, the Pulindas in the Vindhyan mountains and the valley of the Narmada, and the Savaras in the hilly regions of Orissa.

(2) Southern India

All these peoples were influenced by the Aryans, some of whom had by this time crossed the Vindhyas and established settlements in the Deccan.

Perhaps the impact of the Aryan civilization was felt in Western India by the end of the Vedic age, but Aryan settlements were established in that region

(3) Western and Eastern India

only at a later period. Eastern India (Bengal and Assam) came under Aryan occupation after the close of the Vedic Age.

Aryan civilization in Vedic Age—Vedic Literature :

Veda means knowledge. The Hindus do not believe that the Vedas were composed by man. To them, these represent the voice of God as revealed to the seers ; hence these are known as *Sruti* (that which is heard). For many generations the Vedas were transmitted from mouth to mouth.

The Vedic literature is divided into four parts—the Samhitas, the Brahmanas, the Aranyakas and the Upanishads.

The *Samhitas* of Vedic literature consist of a large number of hymns addressed to gods and goddesses. These are really the prayers that the Aryans offered to the deities and also bring out their philosophical outlook. Some historical information may also be gathered from these hymns. The hymns of the Samhitas have been grouped under four heads : Rig Veda, Sama Veda, Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda. The *Rig Veda* is the oldest of all compositions in the language of the Aryans. It has 1028 hymns, divided into 10 *mandalas* or books. The *Sama Veda* consists of 1549 hymns, of which all but 75 are found in the Rig Veda. The hymns of the Sama Veda were used for singing in connection with the performance

(1) Samhitas

Four Vedas

of sacred rites. The *Yajur Veda* contains not merely hymns, but also prose portions which were used while performing sacred rites. The *Atharva Veda* has 731 hymns in all. It is the latest of the four Samhitas. The hymns of the *Atharva Veda* reveal

(2) **Brahmanas** the existence of belief in spirits, ghosts, witchcraft etc. The *Brahmanas* of Vedic literature are composed in prose and contain observations on various sacrificial rites and ceremonies. The different Vedas have different *Brahmanas*.

The *Aranyakas* form a sort of supplement to the *Brahmanas*.
(3) **Aranyakas** They laid down the rituals and religious practices to be observed by old men who had left their homes and retired into forests.

The *Upanishads* are mostly parts of the *Aranyakas*. These are collectively known as *Vedanta* as these represent the conclusion (*anta*) of the Vedas. The *Upanishads* reveal the philosophical thinking of the Aryans at its mature stage. Of
(4) **Upanishads** more than 100 *Upanishads*, the more important are *Isa*, *Kena*, *Katha*, *Aitareya*, *Taittiriya*, *Chhandogya*, *Brihadaranyaka* etc.

For a correct understanding of the vast Vedic literature a thorough and deep study of the pronunciation of words, composition etc. was necessary. This resulted in the composition of a body of works known as *Vedanga* (helps to the study of the Vedas). There are 6 *Vedangas*—*Siksha* (relating to the correct pronunciation of words), *Chhanda* (metres), *Vyakarana* (grammar), *Nirukta* (guide to the origin of words), *Jyotisha* (astrology) and *Kalpa* (guide to religious practices).

Aryan civilization in Vedic Age—Vedic religion: The richness and grandeur of Nature led the Aryans to worship its different manifestations as so many deities.
(Gods) Of the divinities so venerated, *Dyaus* (the god of heaven), *Varuna* (the god, first of the sky, and later of water), *Indra* (the god of rain and thunder), *Marut* (the god of storm) and *Agni*, *Surya*, *Usha*, *Rudra*, etc. are the important ones. Though the Aryans worshipped
(Monotheism) so many gods, the conception of a single divinity was not

foreign to them. Image-worship was not practised during the Vedic age. Perhaps during the period of the Vedangas the gods were propitiated by offerings of milk, ghee, corn etc. The rituals of worship were comparatively simple during the age of the Samhitas. These grew complicated during the Brahmana period, when elaborate rituals were observed. The services of different types of priests were necessary for performance of the sacred rites.

Religious
practices

The philosophical basis of Aryan religion has been expounded mainly in the Aranyakas and the Upanishads. The doctrines of *Karma* and transmigration of souls are two of the chief ideas underlying the Upanishads.

Philosophical
basis of religion

Aryan civilization in Vedic Age—Society : It is not clear whether the caste system was prevalent during the early Vedic period. However, there is no doubt that the Aryans, and the non-Aryans were divided socially. Perhaps even the Aryans themselves had social distinctions based on merit, and division of labour. There were four divisions in society—Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras. Those engaged in the pursuit of learning and performance of sacred

Origin of caste
system and gra-
dual complications

rites were Brahmins. The people who conducted administration and waged war were Kshatriyas. Agriculture as well as trade and commerce were the spheres of activity of the Vaisyas. The non-Aryan Dasas became the lowest caste and came to be known as the Sudras. During the Vedic age there was no bar to inter-marriage between the first three castes. There was also nothing to prevent men belonging to any of the castes from following any occupation they might like to choose for their living. Visvamitra, though born a Kshatriya, was elevated to the rank of Brahmin as a result of his *tapasya* (spiritual exercise).

Gradually the Aryan society lost this spirit of liberalism. It is the Kshatriyas and not the Brahmins who dominate the social scene in the Ramayana and the Mahabharata as well as in Buddhist literature. The Sudras had no social rights.

to speak of. It was their lot to cater to the needs of the higher castes and to engage in acts of labour looked down upon by others.

The Vedic society gave women their due share of recognition. The unmarried girls received education in the homes of their fathers. In this connection we must mention the names of women of great learning such as Gargi, Maitreyi, Ghosa, Viswavara, Apala and others. The Vedic Samhitas include hymns composed by women. It is the wife who ruled over the domestic scene. As she helped her husband in the performance of the sacred rites, the wife came to be known as *Sahadharmini* (partner in religion). Child marriage was not known. Remarriage of widows was perhaps in vogue.

A discussion of Aryan social and religious life must take into account the importance of the four *Asramas*. The life of the Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaisyas consisted of four stages, each of which was known as *asrama*. These four stages were—*Brahmacharya*, *Garhasthya*, *Vanaprastha* and *Sannyasa*. During the first *asrama*, i.e. *Brahmacharya*, the Aryan boy stayed with his *guru* (teacher) and learnt his lessons and elementary religious duties under his direction. The second *asrama*, i.e., *Garhasthya*, began after completion of studies, when the boy, now turned into a young man, married and led a family life. The third stage (*Vanaprastha*) began when the young man, now middle-aged, renounced his worldly cares and went to the forests to spend his days in religious contemplation. In the fourth and final stage (*Sannyasa*) one finally retired from the world in old age to live as an ascetic till death.

Aryan civilization in Vedic Age—Economic Condition :

The life of the Aryans during the period of the Samhitas centred round the village and was mainly agricultural and pastoral. Among the animals domesticated, the cow occupied the most prominent place. The other domestic animals were horses, asses, sheep, goats and dogs. Cultivation was helped by a system of irrigation. The exten-

Domestication of
animals

Agriculture

Industry

Coinage

Commerce

sive forests teemed with rich animal life and the Aryans were naturally accustomed to hunting lions, deer, etc. The mention of professions like those of carpenters, metal-workers etc. in the Vedic literature point to the existence of varied professions and occupations. Division of labour led to an well-organized economic life. Though coins were not unknown, it was mainly a barter economy. Towards the end of the Vedic age cities began to grow. This increasingly lent to the Aryan society the character of an urban civilization. The gradual urbanization led to an extension of trade and commerce. The Aryan merchants not only carried on internal trade. It is quite possible that their ships carried commerce to different countries across the seas.

The Aryans were not given to any great luxury in their dress, food and pleasures. Woollen fabrics and gold ornaments were in use. Wheat, barley, vegetables, fruits and milk were the main items of diet. Meat was taken on festive occasions. *Somarasa* and *Sura* were the popular drinks. Chariot races, dice play, dancing and music formed the chief items of entertainment.

Aryan civilization in Vedic Age—Political Organisation: In the Vedic age the family was the basis of society and state. The head of the family was known as *Grihapati*. A collection of some families constituted a village. A few villages combined to form a *Vis* or *Jana*. The head of the village had the title of *Gramani* and that of the *Vis* or *Jana* was called *Vispati* or *Raja*. Though the democratic element was not entirely foreign to the Vedic state, kingship was the normal feature of political organisation. The king ruled the kingdom and was its protector from external attacks. He had advisers among whom the more important were the *Gramani*, the *Senani* and the *Purohita*. The king was not a despot. There were two popular assemblies, the *Sabha* and the *Samiti*, which acted as a sort of brake to any despotic tendency on the part of the king. The composi-

tion and function of these assemblies cannot be ascertained precisely from the records available to us.

During the early Vedic period the Aryans in India had no political unity. The regions occupied by them were divided into a few small kingdoms which sometimes fought with each other. Towards the close of the Vedic age some king or other was able to exercise his sway over the other kings and came to be known as *Ekarat* (the all-powerful emperor). A king bent on founding an empire performed sacred rites known as *Rajasuya* and *Aswamedha* as a declaration of his paramount power.

Influence of non-Aryans on Aryan civilization:—It would be a mistake to treat ancient Indian civilization as solely an Aryan contribution. The extensive blending of the Aryans and the non-Aryans in social and religious spheres lent to ancient Indian civilization a particular character which cannot be regarded as exclusively Aryan in nature.

The non-Aryans exercised no little influence on Aryan society and religion. It is presumed that the statuette of a god sitting in a *Yogik* posture and surrounded by animals, which was discovered at Mohenjo-daro, represents Siva. Perhaps Siva was initially a non-Aryan deity and was later included in the Aryan pantheon. The practice of *Yoga* was also possibly a non-Aryan contribution to Aryan civilization. Worship of the phallus and the mother goddess also seems to be non-Aryan in origin. So the religion of India is by no means solely Aryan in nature, but a synthesis arising out of the intermixture of Aryan and non-Aryan elements. This intermingling did not begin and end at a certain date. With every new wave of Aryan penetration into the vast Indian expanses, fresh confrontations of the two cultures introduced new elements into the religious scene. It was a continuously evolving process.

A study of ancient Indian scriptures lends confirmation to this view. The Atharva Veda is an astonishing synthesis of

Aryan and non-Aryan thinking. In it we find details from which it would seem that a section of the people were desperately trying to escape from the clutches of ghosts and evil spirits through magic and witchcraft. This terror of the supernatural has no parallel in the Rig Veda which is an expression of a simple, serene faith in gods and goddesses. The Mahabharata also testifies to a mixing together of Aryan and non-Aryan thinking and practice. It embodies diverse religious and social trends of various parts of this vast country and unites these in a common heritage. Indeed, it is a symbol of the composite civilization of India.

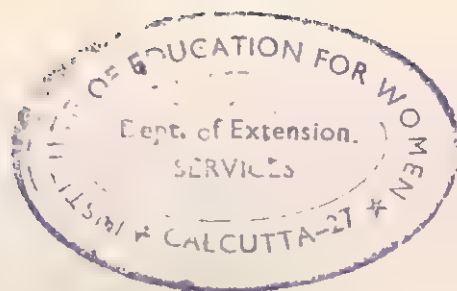
The caste system which characterises the increasing social rigidity of the post-Vedic age seems to be the result mainly of non-Aryan influence. The taboos with regard to food and marriage were perhaps non-Aryan importations in Aryan society. The Dravidian society of South India has all along been a more rigid stickler for the caste system than the more liberal North.

In industry—particularly in city-building—the Aryans seem to be indebted to the non-Aryans. The civilization of Mahenjo-daro was the creation of non-Aryans.

The Aryan civilization was centred round the village at the beginning. It was only towards the close of the Vedic age that cities began to appear. We find in the Mahabharata that the Pandavas secured the services of a demon (?) named Maya for building palaces and other structures in connection with their performance of the sacred rite called *Rajasuya*. This may perhaps be treated as a recognition of the debt that the Aryan art of building owes to its non-Aryan counterpart.

Model Questions :

1. What do you know about the coming of the Aryans and their expansion in India ?
2. Give a brief account of Vedic civilization.
3. Discuss the political, social and economic organisations of the Vedic Aryans.
4. Indicate the nature and extent of non-Aryan influence on Aryan civilization.



CHAPTER 5

Jainism and Buddhism

Growth of new religions : In the 6th century B. C. north-eastern India witnessed a remarkable religious revolution.

Relations between Vedic religion and Buddhism and Jainism Though it was professedly anti-Vedic, the roots of its emergence really lay in Vedic thought. Towards the close of the Vedic age the religion of the Aryans was over-burdened with rituals; it became cumbersome and

lifeless. The *Brahmana* portion of Vedic literature clearly reflects this trend. In the later Vedic period the *Upanishads* record a reaction against it. Some of the *Upanishads* register protest against sacrifice of animals during the performance of sacred rites. This revolution against sacrifice later on culminated in the doctrine of *ahimsa*. The *Upanishads* were more a record of metaphysical speculations than of rituals. The religious revolution in eastern India was the culmination of the revolt against barren Vedic rituals. This revolt was championed by the Kshatriyas; most of the Brahmins stuck to the rituals as before. The founders of Jainism and Buddhism—the two non-conformist faiths—were Kshatriyas.

Rise of Jainism : The Jains believe that 24 *Tirthankaras* or teachers laid down the foundations of Jainism and propagated it. The first *Tirthankara* was Rhishava, the thirteenth Parsvanath, and the twenty-fourth, Mahavira. According to the historians, it was Parsvanath who founded Jainism. The previous *Tirthankaras* were legendary rather than real figures. Parsvanath is said to have belonged to a royal family of Banaras.

Parsvanath. His main teachings to his disciples were four—do not be jealous, do not lie, do not steal and do not possess anything. These teachings are known as "*Chaturyam*".

Mahavira or Vardhamana—his life : The twenty-fourth

and the last *Tirthankara* was Mahavira. In his boyhood he



Family history, dates of birth and death was known as Vardhamana. He was born near Vaisali

in North Bihar in a well-known Kshatriya clan. His father was the leader of this clan and his mother was the sister of the Lichchavi ruler. The date of his birth is not known. As to the date of his death, some historians think that he died in 527 B. C. while others hold that he passed away in 468 B. C.

Mahavira

life of a normal family

man till the age of thirty. His wife's name was Yashoda, who presented him with a daughter. He became tired of family life and left home at thirty, travelled to different places and attained supreme knowledge (*Kaivalya*) as a result of practising the utmost self-torture. He became known as *Jina* (conqueror of passions) and *Nirgrantha* (free from worldly fetters): He also came to be called Mahavira.

Sannyasa ; attainment of supreme knowledge

Propagation of Jainism

He was then forty-two. He lived for thirty more years and propagated Jainism in Magadha, Anga, Kosala etc. He is said to have been acquainted with Bimbisara and Ajatasatru, the two contemporary kings of Magadha. His death took place at Pava (Patna district) at a ripe old age.

Mahavira or Vardhamana—religious teachings :

Mahavira added one more advice to the four main teachings of Parsvanath. He asked his disciples to conquer the senses. The Jains believed that every object possessed a soul and hence it was absolutely necessary to practise *ahimsa* towards everything. They had no faith in Vedic rituals and sacrifices. They rejected the conception of the creation of the world by a Supreme Power and to them real Godhood lay in the fullest manifestation of the powers which lie latent in the soul of man. But they accepted the Hindu doctrines of *karma* and transmigration of soul. It was their view that real salvation could come only through deliverance from the bondages of *karma* and rebirth and that it is asceticism which paved the way to salvation. The Jain and the Buddhist religions have some features indicating similarity, but others which are dissimilar.

Conquest of the
senses ; *ahimsa* ;
atheism ; Karma.

Jain scriptures : According to the Jains, the religious teachings of Mahavira were collected in fourteen ancient volumes known as '*Parba*'. Towards the end of the 4th century B. C., a Jain Council assembled at Pataliputra with the idea of collecting the messages of Mahavira in a lasting form. This Council accordingly arranged the teachings of Mahavira in twelve *Angas* for the benefit of the Jains. A century or two afterwards another Council met at Valabhi in Gujrat where the Jain scriptures were rearranged. These Councils led to the composition of such scriptural works as *Upanga*, *Mulasutra* etc., besides *Anga*. The old scriptures of Jainism are written in a form of Prakrit called *Ardha-Magadhi*. Like the Buddhists, the Jains also were in favour of propagating their creed through the vehicle of popular languages.

Jain organisation : Prior to the Council at Pataliputra there was a famine in South Bihar. At that time many Jains left Bihar for South India under the leadership of Bhadrabahu. Sometime after the Council they returned to Bihar, refused

to abide by the decisions of the Council and continued to use white robes, disobeying Mahavira's injunction to discard all dresses. They came to be known as *Svetambara*; *Digambara*. Those who continued to go without clothes as desired by Mahavira were called *Digambara*. Thus the Jains came to be divided into two sects.

Expansion of Jainism : Jainism was not confined to the place of its birth, Eastern India, but spread to Western and Southern India. However, the increasing influence of Buddhism from the time of Asoka forced Jainism to beat a retreat. It could never cross the boundaries of India. The religion is confined at present mainly to Rajputana and Gujrat.

Gautama Buddha—his life : Gautama or Siddhartha was the founder of Buddhism. In ancient times there was a republican state, Kapilavastu, in the Nepal

Genealogy ;
dates of birth
and death.

terai to the north of the Basti district in U. P.

It belonged to the Sakya clan, whose elected chief, Suddhodana, was the father of Gautama.

Gautama was born in the Lumbini garden (modern Rummindei in Nepal). We do not know the date of his birth. Some historians are of opinion that he passed away in 544 B. C. Others hold this event to have taken place in 486 or 483 B. C. However, that he was a contemporary of Mahavira seems to be beyond doubt.

Gautama's mother Maya Devi died soon after his birth. He was brought up in the atmosphere of pomp and luxury reigning in the palace. In his boyhood he was coached in archery, wrestling etc. as befitted the heir of a Kshatriya ruling clan. He was married at sixteen with a girl named Yasodhara. Gautama was twenty-nine when his son Rahula was born.

Boyhood ; youth ;
family life.

How Gautama became averse to earthly pleasures has been related extensively in Buddhist literature. One day while going through the city he saw an old, infirm man and learnt on

enquiry from his charioteer that this was the inevitable fate of all worldly creatures. This moved him deeply. Sometime later his attention was attracted by a disease-ridden man and a dead body. Again his charioteer informed him that disease and death are the way of all flesh. The young prince then became preoccupied with seeking a way out for mankind from its inevitable doom of old age, disease and death. Sometime

later he met a seer who impressed him very much. From him Gautama learnt that renunciation of all forms of bondage is the way to salvation. He accordingly left his home one night when the whole world was sleeping. His attachment to his wife and son and the fact that he was the heir to the chieftainship of Kapilavastu did not prove strong enough to prevent him from renouncing the world. This event in Gautama's life is known in Buddhist literature as *Mahavinishkramana*.

After leaving his home Gautama travelled in many places in search of truth. For some time he studied scriptures under two teachers. Then he went to Uruvilva (near modern Bodh Gaya) and practised the severest austerities on the banks of the river Nairanjana. But study of scriptures and asceticism did not bring him any nearer to the truth. He then gave himself up to deep meditation under a tree. At long last enlightenment came to him like a blinding flash. The ultimate truth was now revealed to him and he became **Buddha** or the Enlightened One. The place of his enlightenment later on became known as Bodh Gaya and the tree under which he meditated came to be called Bodhidruma.

Gautama was only 35 at this time. He lived for 45 years more. During this long period he propagated his faith in Magadha, Kosala and other places. He gave his first lesson at Sarnath near Banaras. Later on Rajagriha, Kapilavastu and Sravasti became the centres of Buddhism. In course of spreading his faith he came in contact with Bimbisara, the king of

Renunciation of
the world

Ascetic life ;
Enlightenment

Propagation of
faith

Magadha, Prasenjit, the king of Kosala, and others. He



Buddha

passed away at the age of eighty at Kusinagar in the Gorakhpur district of U. P. Gāutama's passing away is known in Buddhist literature as *Mahaparinirvana*.

Gautama Buddha—his religious teachings : Gautama's primary aim was to point out the way to deliverance from the Four Truths grim reality of sorrow and suffering.

So he enunciated the "Four Noble Truths": (1) There is suffering. (2) This suffering has a cause. (3) This can be got rid of. (4) Deliverance from suffering can be had only if one follows the path of truth and justice. It was his message that worldly pleasures cannot make sorrow and suffering vanish. Equally futile is stern asceticism. It was only by following the

'great Middle Path', i.e., by conducting oneself with moderation in every aspect of life that one can hope to attain deliverance from sorrow and suffering. Salvation is termed by the Buddhists as *Nirvana*, which can be attained only by following the 'noble Eight-fold Path': (1) right belief; (2) right thought; (3) right speech; (4) right action; (5) right means of livelihood; (6) right endeavour; (7) right recollection; (8) right meditation. Like the Jains, the Buddhists refused to recognise the authority of the Vedas and

to observe the Vedic rituals and sacrifices. Buddhism, like Jainism, lays the greatest emphasis on *ahimsa*.
 Eightfold Path As was the case with the Jains, the Buddhists also did not believe that there was any God. Like the Jains, again, the Buddhists accepted the Hindu beliefs in *karma* and transmigration of the soul. In some respects the tenets of Buddhism resemble those of Jainism and Hinduism ; in others, they differ.

Buddhist scriptures : Buddha preached his beliefs orally and did not commit these to writing. In order to make his teachings easily understandable for the common people he used in his sermons the popular Pali language. Soon after his *Mahaparinirvana*, his disciples assembled at Rajagriha in a Council and made a collection of his teachings. This is known in history as the first Buddhist Council.

The book comprising his teachings was written in the Pali language and was known as *Tripitaka* ('three baskets').

Tripitaka It had three parts : (1) *Sutta-pitaka* (the sermons of Buddha) ; (2) *Vinaya-pitaka* (rules for the guidance of Buddhist monks) ; (3) *Abhidhamma-pitaka* (philosophical principles which formed the basis of Buddhism). In spite of the existence of the *Tripitaka*, there were differences of opinion about Buddha's teachings in later times. To resolve such differences, three more Buddhist Councils met at different times. The third Council assembled at the time of Asoka and the fourth during the reign of Kanishka.

A discussion of the sacred literature of Buddhism must take into account the Jatakas. These deal with the stories of different births of Buddha and occupy a sacred place in the hearts of the devout Buddhists. To the historians, the Jatakas are very important from another aspect ;
 The Jatakas these provide a wealth of data relating to social and economic conditions.

Within two hundred years of the death of Buddha the religion founded by him lost its unifying force ; different sects appeared in different regions. The *Achariyavada* sects deified Buddha and thus paved the way for the rise of *Mahayana*

which took shape during the Kushana period. Other sects remained loyal to the original tenets of Buddhism and came to be known as *Hinayana*.

Buddhism outside India : During the reign of the great Maurya emperor Asoka, mainly due to his efforts, Buddhism spread not only all over India but also travelled beyond the confines of this land to countries far and near, such as Ceylon, Suvarnabhumi (South Burma), and the Greek kingdoms of Western Asia. After the fall of the Maurya empire Buddhism spread to Central Asia and China. Kasyapa Matanga introduced the creed in China in the first century A. D. The writings of Fa-hien and Hiuen-Tsang attest to the existence of a number of Buddhist *Viharas* (monasteries) in Central Asia. Buddhism also put in its appearance in different countries of south-east Asia. The remains of the great Borobudur temple in Java are an imperishable monument to the Buddhist art of this region. The countries outside India which were affected by the flood tide of Buddhism still retain distinct traces of Indian influence in their art and literature.

Model Questions :

1. Give an account of the rise of Jainism. What are the principal teachings of the Tirthankaras?
2. Write a short biography of Buddha, with special emphasis on his religious teachings.
3. Write short notes on—the Tirthankaras, the Tripitakas.

CHAPTER 6

Foreign Invasions and the Maurya Empire

Political condition of India in the 6th. century B. C. : During the 6th century B. C., *i.e.*, during the century which produced Mahavira and Buddha, the political scene in India came to assume a more or less definite shape. Sanskrit and

Pali works mention the existence of sixteen states (*Mahajana-padas*) in India at that time. Some of these states were monarchical, the others republican, in form. The following

four were among the more prominent monarchical states : (1) Kosala—It roughly corresponds to modern Oudh. At first Ayodhya and later on Sravasti (modern Sahet Mahet, Gonda district, U. P.) became the capital of this kingdom. It included the territory of the Sakyas of Kapilavastu and Kasi. (2) Avanti—It roughly corresponds to central Malwa (in modern Madhya Pradesh). It was divided into two parts. The northern part had its capital at Ujjain and the southern part at Mahishmati. (3) Vamsa or Vatsa—It lay along the banks of the Jumna, to the north-east of Avanti, with its capital at Kausambi (modern Kosam, near Allahabad). (4) Magadha—It corresponds roughly to the modern Patna and Gaya districts of Bihar. Its earliest capital was Girivraja ; then Rajagriha and finally Pataliputra became its political centre.

Among the republican states the Vajji confederation deserves special mention. It comprised the territories occupied by eight clans. Of these clans, the Lichchhavis are well-known in history. The confederation had its capital at Vaisali. Another republican state was Kapilavastu of the Sakya clan, lying at the foothills of the Himalayas.

Rise of Magadha : As the existence of the sixteen states demonstrates, India had no political unity in the 6th century B. C. However, a large part of India came to be united under the Nanda dynasty of Magadha as that state gradually extended its sway. The rise of Magadha is, therefore, an important landmark in the history of ancient India.

During the middle of the 6th century B. C. Magadha was ruled by Bimbisara of the Haryanka dynasty. It was during his reign that Magadha started on its career of ascendancy in the Indian political scene. One of Bimbisara's major achievements was the conquest

of the kingdom of Anga in eastern Bihar. Besides, his Kosalan wife brought him a part of the kingdom of Kasi as dowry. He contracted matrimonial alliances with the ruling families



India in circa 600 B.C.

of Lichchhavi, Videha (in North Bihar) and Madra (Central Punjab).

Ajatasatru, son of Bimbisara, enlarged the boundaries of his kingdom by defeating Kosala and occupying a part of Kasi.

His war with the Lichchhavis brought him Vaisali. He also seems to have fought the ruler of Avanti. He successfully followed Bimbisara's policy of expansion.

Ajatasatru's son, Udayin, founded a new capital at Pataliputra. The situation of the new capital at the confluence of two rivers, the Ganges and the Son, made it commercially as well as strategically important. Pataliputra was the political epicentre of India for several centuries.

The successors of Udayin were weak and as a result the Haryankas had to yield the kingdom to the Sisunaga dynasty. The first ruler of this dynasty, Sisunaga, made Magadha more powerful by eliminating Avanti from its position of power and prestige.

The weak successor of Sisunaga was murdered by Mahapadma Nanda, who then ascended the throne of Magadha. Though of low birth, he showed exceptional qualities as a ruler. The Puranas describe him as *ekarat* (the sole ruler of the earth) and *Sarvakshatrantaka* (the destroyer of all Kshatriyas). He possibly extended the boundaries of Magadha to the borders of east Punjab. Kalinga (portion of modern Orissa and Andhra) was included in his dominions. Some historians are inclined to the view that some portions of the Deccan might have formed part of the Nanda empire. History has no record of the existence of such an extensive empire prior to it. Mahapadma Nanda may be regarded as the first historical empire-builder in India.

After the death of Mahapadma Nanda the throne of Magadha was occupied by his eight sons in succession. During the reign of the last Nanda, Dhana Nanda, north-western India was invaded by Alexander the Great, the Greek king of Macedon. The reign of the Nandas was put to an end by Chandragupta Maurya.

Persian invasion of north-western India: While in the north Magadha was acquiring the stature of an empire by absorbing the rival kingdoms, north-western India was losing its independence to foreign invaders. This was perhaps mainly due to lack of political unity in that region, which paved the way to the success of the invaders from outside. During the

6th century B. C. the Persian emperor, Cyrus the Great, destroyed the Assyrian empire and established a vast empire in West Asia. He extended his sway up to the Indus. Later, under Darius, the Persian empire embraced the Indus valley and Gandhara (Rawalpindi and the neighbouring regions in West Pakistan). When Xerxes invaded Greece, his vast army included Indian soldiers. The Persian occupation of north-western India continued till the invasion of Alexander the Great.

Invasion of Alexander: Alexander, king of Macedonia in Greece, invaded Asia and put an end to the Persian empire. After this, he crossed the Hindu-kush mountains and entered India in 327 B.C. North-west India at that time was divided into numerous petty states. The kingdom of Taxila occupied the eastern part of old Gandhara. In the region lying between the Jhelum and the Chenab rivers flourished the kingdom of Porus. All these petty states were preoccupied with mutual rivalry and failed naturally to unite to resist the common enemy and thus save the independence of the country.



Alexander

After defeating some wild mountain tribes, Alexander crossed the Indus in 326 B.C. Ambhi, the king of Taxila, surrendered to him without putting up any fight. Alexander then began to proceed eastwards with Greek troops after fortifying the region lying

west of the Indus. On the bank of the river Jhelum he met

opposition from Porus. The army of Porus was inferior to that of Alexander both in number and in fighting skill. As a general, Porus was no match at all for Alexander. Inevitably Porus was defeated, though he displayed matchless courage. His army was destroyed and he himself became a prisoner. But Alexander let him free and also gave him back his kingdom. This generosity of Alexander was motivated by the hope that as Ambhi and Porus had no love lost between them, each would co-operate with the Greeks.

Alexander then advanced up to the river Hyphasis and conquered a number of petty states on the way. He wished to proceed further east and occupy the fertile Gangetic valley, but his army was not prepared to face the prospects of endless marches in unknown territories. They were also naturally very eager to return to their own country after a long period of absence. Tired with innumerable fights, they eagerly looked forward to a period of rest. It is not impossible that reports about the military strength of Magadha added to their reluctance to proceed further deep into India. Anyhow, with his army in such a mood, Alexander was left with no alternative but to start on the long journey back home. So began his voyage down the course of the Punjab rivers to the sea (326 B. C.). During the retreat he encountered serious opposition from such peoples as the Siboi, the Malloi etc. and subjugated the Lower Indus valley. He then proceeded towards Persia through Baluchistan and died at the age of thirty-three only at Babylon.

Some Western historians have argued that it was the military weakness of the Indians which led to Alexander's victories in India. This view does not appear to be acceptable. The Indians repeatedly showed their wonderful courage and fighting skill in their encounters with the Greeks. The Greek historians themselves have praised the fighting stand of Porus.

Alexander himself was wounded in his campaign against

the Malloi, who certainly gave him a stiff fight. The Greek writings frequently refer to the military might of the Nandas. Alexander's success was due really to two causes primarily. The first and main reason was the fact that the people of north-west India failed to put up a united stand against the Greeks owing to lack of political unity. Secondly, Alexander had no equal among the Indians in generalship.

Causes of Alexander's success

Effects of Alexander's Invasion : Within a few years after Alexander's departure from this country Chandragupta Maurya drove out the Greek generals and occupied the north-western region. The Greek occupation of India was thus undone. Sometime later Seleukos, one of the generals and heirs of Alexander, made an attempt to bring north-western India again into the Greek fold, but met more than a match in Chandragupta Maurya and failed in the attempt. Thus Alexander's invasion of India did not lead to any permanent occupation of Indian territory by the Greeks. However, the coming of the Bactrian Greeks to north-western India after the fall of the Maurya empire was an indirect result of Alexander's invasion. The invasion had another very significant political impact. By destroying the power of the petty states of north-western India Alexander had indirectly paved the way for establishment of political unity in that region. Had there not been any Greek invasion of north-western India, it would perhaps have not been so easy for Chandragupta Maurya to bring the area under the Maurya empire.

The invasion led to more extensive contacts between Europe and India. Extension of commerce and maritime activities paved the way for cultural exchanges. But any Greek influence on India immediately after Alexander, *i. e.*, during the Maurya period, is hardly traceable. The Greek influence that is noticeable in the fields of art, literature, astronomy etc. of this country cannot be attributed directly to Alexander's invasion. It is the Bactrian Greeks of north-western India of the post-Maurya epoch who made a lasting impact on Indian civilization.

Origin of Maurya empire : Some time after Alexander had left India, Chandragupta Maurya put an end to the Nanda dynasty and ascended the throne of Pataliputra. Chandragupta is described in Hindu tradition as a Sudra and his mother (or grandmother) Mura is said to have been the wife of a Nanda king. This tradition traces the origin of the word 'Maurya' from Mura. But according to Buddhist tradition, the Mauryas or the Moriyas were a Kshatriya clan located in Pippalivana, which probably lay somewhere between Rummindei in the Nepalese *terai* and Kasia in the Gorakhpur district of U. P.. Chandragupta was probably the leader of this clan. Chandragupta perhaps came to the forefront taking advantage of the general discontent prevalent against the oppressive rule of the Nanda king, Dhana Nanda.

Chandragupta met Alexander in the Punjab. Perhaps he wanted to enlist Greek help in his revolt against the Nanda king. But Alexander resented the boldness of his speech and ordered him to be put to death. Chandragupta saved himself by a hasty flight. Then he collected an army in the Vindhyan forests, put an end to the rule of Dhana Nanda and became the new ruler of Magadha (approximately 324 B. C.): Tradition has it that he was helped in this adventure by a crafty Brahmin of Taxila, Chanakya or Kautilya. The Nanda king was said to have incurred the wrath of this spirited Brahmin by insulting him. After ascending the throne of Magadha Chandragupta busied himself in extending his dominions. Meanwhile, with the departure of Alexander, his prefects in north-western India had become considerably weak. Chandragupta put an end to their rule in the Punjab.

After the death of Alexander his vast empire was divided among his generals, and one of them, Seleukos, secured Syria. When he heard that Chandragupta had driven out the Greeks from the Punjab, he advanced to India with an army and came up to the Indus. But he could not oust Chandragupta from

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the Punjab and made peace by ceding to Chandragupta Kabul, Kandahar and Herat in Afghanistan and Makran in Baluchistan. Chandragupta presented him with 500 elephants. The Maurya emperor and the Greek king thus became friends. In order to put this friendship on a firm basis, the two families entered into a matrimonial alliance. A Greek envoy named Megasthenes was sent to the Maurya court. All these developments testify not only to Chandragupta's military power, but also to the extension of his empire to the very borders of Persia in the west. Friendly relations between the Greeks and the Mauryas remained intact till the death of Asoka.

Other conquests of Chandragupta : A Greek historian has written that Chandragupta brought all India under Magadha with an army of six lakhs. There seems to be little doubt that almost the whole of north India came under his sway. But whether his authority extended to Kashmir and Assam is open to doubt. His struggle with Seleukos brought Afghanistan and Baluchistan under him. In the west his authority extended to Saurashtra. It is not known for certain how far he advanced in the south. Tradition has it that Mysore was included in his empire. There is no doubt that his empire was larger than that of the Nandas. No king in India prior to him could establish and rule over such a vast empire as his.

Megasthenes : It has already been mentioned that Seleukos of Syria sent a Greek envoy named Megasthenes to the court of Chandragupta. During his long residence at Pataliputra Megasthenes collected much information relating to the administrative system and economic and social conditions in Maurya India. All these he put in a book which disappeared long ago. Some portions of this lost work were quoted in the writings of later Greek historians. These incomplete materials are all that we possess regarding what Megasthenes had described, but these are indispensable for a

Extent of
Chandragupta's
empire

Megasthenes'
account

reconstruction of the history of the Maurya empire. Megasthenes has, however, related many things which are beyond any doubt imaginary and incredible. His lack of acquaintance with Sanskrit led him to make some obvious mistakes. We must, therefore, treat his description and observations as not trustworthy in all respects.

Megasthenes described in detail the city of Pataliputra, the capital of the Maurya empire. It was well-administered, the administration being vested in a council of thirty members. This council was again divided into six bodies of five members each. Each body was entrusted with specialised functions, such as looking after the industrial arts; taking care of foreigners; registration of births and deaths; supervision of retail trade, weights and measures; supervision of the sale of goods and collection of levy on articles sold. The details given by Megasthenes do not tally in some respects with those in the *Arthashastra* of Kautilya, according to whom the administration of the capital was entrusted to officials known as *Nagaradhyakshas*.

According to Megasthenes, the affairs of the army were run by a similar batch of officials numbering thirty, divided into six groups of five members each. Each group was in charge of a particular department—admiralty, commissariat and transport, infantry, cavalry, war-chariots and elephants. In regard to military administration also, the observations of Megasthenes do not always agree with the details given in Kautilya's *Arthashastra*. According to Kautilya, officials known as *Baladhyakshas* directed military affairs.

Megasthenes recorded various particulars about Maurya administration. The emperor himself led his army in war and delivered judgments on law-suits. High officials supervised survey of land, irrigation work, collection of revenues and various public utility works. Numerous spies reported on the situation in different parts of the country and the activi-

Administration of Pataliputra

Royal duties;
duties of officials;
spies; penal code

ties of the officials. The penal code was very severe. Those found guilty of serious crimes had their limbs cut off. Regarding all these particulars, Megasthenes and Kautilya generally confirm each other.

Megasthenes did not confine himself to the description of administrative affairs only. He also collected varied information on social and economic affairs. He divided the Indians of his time into seven castes—the philosophers (the Brahmins and the Buddhist *Sramanas*), the tillers of the soil, herdsmen and hunters, artisans, soldiers, *paridarshakas* (overseers) and *Amatyas* (councillors). Megasthenes seems to have treated occupation as an indication of caste. That is why he did not divide Hindu society into four castes (Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisya and Sudra) as was done by Kautilya, but into seven castes according to occupation. Perhaps the caste system was already becoming rigid during the Maurya period, for Megasthenes stated that no one could marry outside his own caste or take to any occupation other than that reserved for his caste.

Megasthenes had an excellent opinion of the moral character of the Indians. People in general lived a very simple and unostentatious life. Nobody drank except during sacrifices. Lying was unusual. Thefts were very rare. People slept at night leaving the doors of their houses wide open, for there was no fear of theft. The tillers of the soil were recognised as indispensable for society and their fields were not ravaged even during times of war. There was no slavery. The people lived an easy life and did not know scarcity or famine conditions. As a matter of fact, however, Megasthenes was exaggerating when he spoke of the absence of slavery and famines. Slavery was by no means unknown and famines also stalked the land sometimes.

'Arthasastra' of Kautilya: It has already been pointed out that according to tradition, a crafty Brahmin of Taxila named Kautilya or Chanakya rendered great assistance to

Chandragupta in putting an end to the Nanda dynasty. When Chandragupta occupied the throne of Magadha, Kautilya became his minister. There are

references in Sanskrit literature to a book, *Arthashastra*, by Kautilya. Some time back a book of this name has been found. Some historians consider this find as the famous *Arthashastra* of Kautilya. Others, however,

Does Kautilya's *Arthashastra* actually exist? are not ready to ascribe its authorship to Kautilya; to them its author was some unknown writer of a later period. As the

problem of authorship has not yet been resolved, the historical value of this book is open to doubt. Those who think that the book is actually Kautilya's *Arthashastra* are of opinion that the system of administration described in it is that of Chandragupta. In some respects the data available from this book do not agree with those left by Megasthenes; but taken all in all, the two books have much

Historical value of the book in common. Without the data given in the *Arthashastra*, our information about the

Maurya system of administration would be sketchy.

Civil administration of Chandragupta: For a sketch of the civil administration of Chandragupta we have to depend mainly on two sources—the account of Megasthenes and the *Arthashastra*.

How far we can depend on these sources has already been discussed. The rock edicts of Asoka are also of help to us in some respects.

The head of the empire was the king. The Mauryas did not assume the title of emperor. In his rock edicts Asoka referred to himself as king. It was perhaps natural for the absolute ruler of such a vast empire to be an autocrat. However, the Mauryas, though autocratic in principle, were not despots. The well-being of their subjects was their main aim. The *Arthashastra* states that the king should, like a paid servant,

King's powers, duties and responsibilities

devote his life to the welfare of his people. From the accounts of Greek writers we find that throughout the day the king

attended to the affairs of his subjects without sparing himself. He administered the country according to the precepts of the scriptures and the customs and conventions of the times. In almost all matters he sought the advice of his ministers. The administration was thus not conducted according to the whims of the king. He personally led the army in war and delivered judgments in law-suits. He had the right to frame laws. The rock edicts of Asoka point to his law-making powers. Appointment of officials and supervision of administration were included among the king's duties.

According to the *Arthashastra*, the king cannot rule without the help of his ministers. Kautilya refers to two classes of Ministers—*Mantrins* and *Amatyas*. The *Mahamatras* of the Asokan edicts are probably the *Mantrins* of Kautilya. The *Amatyas* occupied the high positions in the judicial and administrative set-up. There was also a *Mantriparishad* (Council of Ministers) to aid and advise the king. Not all members of the *Mantriparishad* were ministers. In any emergency the king sought the advice of the Council of Ministers and was usually guided by the majority opinion.

The top-ranking officials who supervised the administration were known as *Adhyakshas* or *Superintendents*. The *Arthashastra* gives details of the duties of 32 such *Adhyakshas* of various departments (mint, mines, treasury, prisons, chariots, horses etc.). Some of these superintendents were in charge of military affairs.

The judicial administration was headed by the king himself. Besides his own court, there were other courts at various levels for efficient administration of justice. Among the officials of the judiciary, the *Vyavaharika Mahamatras* and the *Rajukas* require particular mention.

The vast empire of Chandragupta was divided into several provinces, though we do not know the exact number. Under Asoka there were at least five provinces—Prachya, Avanti, Uttarapatha, Kalinga and Dakshinapatha—with their capitals respectively at Pataliputra,

Ujjain, Taxila, Tosali and Suvarnagiri. Of these, Kalinga did not perhaps form part of Chandragupta's empire. The other provinces were probably in existence during his reign. The king himself looked after the administration of the provinces near the capital. The outlying provinces were governed by *Kumaras* or princes of the royal blood. Chandragupta's empire included, besides those directly under him, peoples and cities having an autonomous status. The *Arthashastra* refers to *Sanghas* or corporate bodies of warriors in Kamboja and Surastra.

A host of informers kept watch over the condition of the country and the activities of the officials. Megasthenes refers to spies. The *Arthashastra* deals extensively with various categories of informers, who should more appropriately be called intelligence agents.

Espionage

Under the Mauryas the villages enjoyed a somewhat autonomous status. Officers known as *Gramikas* looked after the affairs of the villages. They used to be guided by the advice of the village elders. High officials of the state supervised the work of the *Gramikas*.

Village administration

The king's share of the produce of the soil usually amounted to one-sixth, but it was sometimes raised to one-fourth. This was known as *bhaga*. In towns the king realised fines, taxes on births and deaths, duties on sales, etc.

Military system of Chandragupta: Chandragupta had a vast standing army for purposes of conquest, resistance to foreign aggression and maintenance of peace and order within his far-flung domains. This army was composed of infantry numbering six hundred thousand, a cavalry thirty thousand strong, nine thousand elephants and numerous chariots. Besides, Chandragupta had a powerful navy consisting of a large number of war-vessels. What Megasthenes and Kautilya had to say about the management of this vast military machine has already been referred to.

Army and navy

Bindusara: After the death of Chandragupta his son

Amitraghata (slayer of foes) Bindusara ruled for approximately 25 years. We do not know for certain whether he had any conquest to his credit. The cordial relations established during the reign of Chandragupta with the Greek rulers of Western Asia were maintained by Bindusara. The king of Syria sent to his court a Greek envoy named Deimachos. Perhaps another Greek envoy came to him from the ruler of Egypt. The relations between Maurya India and these Greek kingdoms were not confined to the political sphere only but extended to the cultural field also.

Relations with
Greeks

Asoka (273-232 B. C.)

Accession of Asoka : On the death of Bindusara his son Asoka succeeded him to the throne of Magadha. Some Pali chronicles refer to a struggle for succession among the sons of Bindusara ; Asoka is said to have emerged victorious, killed his brothers and ascended the throne. This traditional account is most probably not true.

Asoka ascended the throne in or about 273 B. C., but his coronation took place four years later, in 269 B. C. Why the coronation was delayed and what happened during these intervening years are questions to which we have no answers, as we have no reliable information on these points.

Conquest of Kalinga : Soon after his accession Asoka, following in the footsteps of his grandfather, Chandragupta, embarked on wars of conquest. In the thirteenth year of his reign he invaded Kalinga and conquered it. Modern Orissa and parts of Andhra were then known as Kalinga. Asoka's Rock Edict XIII describes graphically the conquest of Kalinga which resulted in tremendous bloodshed. According to Rock Edict XIII, "One hundred and fifty thousand persons were carried away captive. One hundred thousand were slain and many times that number perished". The newly-conquered territory became a part of Asoka's empire with its capital at Tosali in the Puri district. The awful carnage

Significance of
conquest of
Kalinga

of the Kalinga war had a great impact on Asoka's mind : this was the first as also the last war he launched. With the annexation of Kalinga the era of imperial expansion, which had begun in the days of Bimbisara, came to an end. That is why the Kalinga war is a very significant event in the history of ancient India.

Extent of Asoka's empire : The extent of the Maurya empire under Asoka may almost precisely be determined.

North In the north-west his empire stretched up to the frontiers of the Greek kingdom of Syria

and included modern Afghanistan and Baluchistan. The Yonas, the Kambojas and the Gandharas of the north-west frontier region have been described by Asoka in his Rock Edicts as dependent tribes. In the travel account of Hiuen-Tsang of China and in the *Rajatarangini* Kashmir has been described as part of the empire of Asoka. That Asoka's domains in the north included the *terai* region of Nepal is proved by his Rock Edicts. Hiuen-Tsang saw *stupas* constructed by Asoka in north and south Bengal, but it is not known whether his empire extended beyond

East
West
South

the Brahmaputra. In the west and in the south his empire extended respectively to the Arabian Sea and the southern part of Mysore.

The Rock Edicts refer to the kingdoms of the Far South (Chola, Pandya, Satyaputra, Keralaputra) as friendly border states.

Asoka's conversion to Buddhism : The remorse felt by Asoka as a result of the bloodshed in the Kalinga war attracted him to the doctrine of *Ahimsa* and he was converted to Buddhism by a Buddhist monk named Upagupta. Though a Buddhist, he had a very liberal attitude to all other religions. In his Rock Edicts he refers to himself as *Devanampiya*. This is a clear indication of the respect he had for the *Deva*-worshipping Brahmins. In the

Liberality to
all religions

Rock Edicts he asked his people to show respect both to the Sramanas (Buddhist monks)

and the Brahmins. He dedicated some caves near Gaya for

the use of the Ajivika monks. A Rock Edict contains his message, "The King does reverence to men of all sects". This liberal religious attitude is one of the main features of Asoka's character and political outlook.

Ideal of Dhamma and unique foreign policy : The carnage of the Kalinga war not only led Asoka to embrace Buddhism, but was also a turning point in his foreign policy. In one of his Rock Edicts he declared that conquest through war resulted in slaughter, death and imprisonment for many. He was so eager to prevent bloodshed that he gave up the ancient Kshatriya and Brahmanical tradition of *Digvijaya* (conquest by war) and substituted for it the novel ideal of *Dhammavijaya* (conquest by *Dhamma*, or Law of Piety). According to Buddhist literature, the ideal of conquest by *Dhamma* consists in winning over *Dhammavijaya* men through love and *Ahimsa* instead of through the sword. After his victory in the Kalinga war Asoka embraced this ideal and followed it till his death. The reverberation of the war drums was replaced by the reverberation of *Dhamma*. There is no other parallel in history of any king embracing such a noble ideal and practising it.

Acceptance of the ideal of *Dhammavijaya* logically led Asoka to cultivate friendly relations with the neighbouring kingdoms. He did not attempt any extension of his empire by conquering them through the sword. There were in his time four small but independent kingdoms in the Far South—Chola (Trichinopalli and Tanjore districts of Tamil Nadu), Pandya (Madura, Tinnevelley and Ramnad districts of Tamil Nadu, and the southern part of Travancore in Kerala), Satyaputra (the northern portion of Malabar in Kerala) and Keralaputra (the southern part of Malabar and northern portion of Travancore in Kerala). Then there was Tamraparni or Ceylon farther to the south. It would not have been very difficult for the mighty ruler of Magadha to subjugate these small kingdoms, but instead of

Foreign policy :
(1) Kingdoms of the south,
(2) Ceylon

sending armies he sent his missionaries to these kingdoms for preaching the gospel of *Ahimsa*.

Ever since the invasion of Seleukos the Maurya kings had maintained cordial relations with the Greek rulers of Western Asia. To them also Asoka applied his ideal of *Dhammavijaya*. Antiochos Theos of Syria, Antigonas

(3) Greek
kingdoms

Gonatas of Macedonia, Alexander of Epirus (or of Corinth), Ptolemy II Philadelphos of Egypt, king Magas of Cyrene in North

Africa—with all these Greek kings Asoka was in relations of amity. He sent his envoys to them and set up centres inside their kingdoms for affording relief to distressed people. Establishment of such ties with countries far away indicates Asoka's power as well as broadness of vision.

Missionary activities within the empire: Though respectful to all religions, Asoka naturally had a particular regard for Buddhism. He took various steps for the propagation of the ideal of *Ahimsa* both within and outside his empire. His Rock Edicts testify to his sincere efforts to spread the message of Buddhism. No other king in

Inscriptions

Indian history has left recorded in inscriptions such elaborate particulars of his activities. These inscriptions are known as *Dhammalipi* and stand inscribed on rocks and pillars in various parts of India. Asoka caused his inscriptions to be composed in Prakrit instead of Sanskrit so that the common people might not find it difficult to understand his message. In some places the Brahmi script was used and in others the Kharosthi. These inscriptions provide the best materials for a history of Asoka's reign. Recently, in a place called Shar-i-Kuna near the city of Kandahar in Afghanistan, a rock inscription of Asoka in Greek and Aramaic languages has been discovered.

In his inscriptions Asoka urges his people to show respect to parents and other seniors, to be reverential to Brahmins and Sramanas, to speak the truth, to be kindly to men and other living creatures, to behave properly with friends, relatives and servants,

Message of
inscriptions

not to show hatred for other religions, and to cultivate such qualities as mercy, gratitude, piety etc. There is no doubt that these messages helped considerably in the moral uplift of the Indian people. At the same time these also paved the way for Buddhism and came in handy for the Buddhists who had not renounced the world.

Asoka directed highly placed royal officials to spread his *Dhamma* in different parts of his empire. At first he entrusted the *Yutas*, *Rajukas* and *Pradesikas* with the task. Later, he created a new class of officials known as *Dharma-mahamatras* for the purpose. It was their duty to travel through the empire and preach *Dhamma*. Under Asoka's order needless slaughter of animals was prohibited.

For the propagation of *Dhamma* Asoka did not rely only on his officials and missionaries. He himself went out on propaganda missions and thus set a noble example before his people. Previously it was the custom of kings to undertake pleasure trips known as *Viharayatra*. Asoka sacrificed his own pleasures, substituted *Dharmayatra* for *Viharayatra* and spread the gospel in different parts of the empire. He visited in this connection some places associated with Buddhism, e. g., birth-place of Buddha.

Asoka paid particular attention to prevention of sectarian attitude among the Buddhists. During his reign the third Buddhist Council met at Pataliputra. The primary object of this Council was to make a systematic compilation of the Buddhist doctrines. Asoka took steps to suppress heresy among the Buddhists. These measures helped indirectly in the spread of Buddhism. By preventing dissension among the followers of Buddhism Asoka increased the power of the Buddhist Sangha and the influence of the faith.

Propagation of Buddhism beyond the empire : Asoka was not satisfied with propagating his religion within the confines of his far-flung empire. He also sent missionaries

to different countries far and near with a view to spreading his message of *Ahimsa* and amity. In fact, (1) The Far South it was due to Asoka's efforts that Buddhism (2) Ceylon spread for the first time beyond the geographical limits of India and became a mighty creed embracing several countries. His missionaries propagated his message in the Chola, Pandya, Satyaputra and Keralaputra kingdoms in the Far South and also in Tamraparni or Ceylon. Asoka's son (or brother) Mahendra and his daughter Sanghamitra led a mission to Ceylon and were successful in converting King Tissa and his subjects to Buddhism. It is also probable that Asoka sent missionaries to Suvarnabhumi (South Burma and Sumatra). Missions sent by Asoka also (3) Suvarnabhumi travelled to various Greek kingdoms in Syria, (4) Greek kingdoms Greece, Egypt, North Africa etc. with a view to propagating Buddhism. There is no doubt that Buddhism had an impact on the religious life of Western Asia. Today, almost a third of the world's population professes Buddhism. Asoka's vast propaganda work laid foundations of Buddhism as a world religion.

Humanitarian activities of Asoka: Asoka was eager to do all he could for the welfare of humankind as well as of animals. He took various measures to restrict killing of animals. Medicinal herbs were planted at different places so as to facilitate treatment of the sick, both human and animal. These measures were not confined within the boundaries of the Maurya empire. In the independent kingdoms of the Far South, in Ceylon, even in the Greek kingdoms of Western Asia, Europe and Egypt Asoka set up hospitals for human beings as well as animals. His boundless love for humanity was not limited to any particular place, time or being. He built roads and caused trees to be planted and wells dug by the roadside for the convenience of travellers. He also saw to it that those in distress received alms.

Asoka did not confine himself to looking after the material welfare of his subjects. He also tried to serve them

uplift of his subjects.

Administration: Among the rulers of ancient India none possessed such a vast empire as Asoka. Already at the time of Chandragupta this vast empire was soundly and efficiently governed through an elaborate administrative system. The *Arthashastra* and the account of Megasthenes testify to this. Asoka introduced some reforms in the system for the welfare of his subjects.

During the reign of Asoka the Maurya empire was divided into at least five provinces. These were Uttarapatha, Avanti, Dakshinapatha, Kalinga and Prachya which had their capitals respectively at Taxila, Ujjain, Suvarnagiri (not certain), Tosali and Pataliputra. The regions near Pataliputra were under the direct rule of the king. The administration of some provinces was entrusted to *Kumaras* or princes of royal blood.

The king and the provincial rulers carried on administration with the help of a numerous body of high officials. Officials with the title *Mahamatra* governed the large cities and districts. Some among them acted as judges while others looked after the affairs of the frontier areas. The *Rajukas* were another class of high officials. Their duties probably lay in the spheres of revenue administration and judiciary. Officials known as *Pradesikas* collected revenues, took preventive measures against theft, tried criminal cases etc. The *Yutas* or the *Yuktas* codified the royal instructions. Besides all these, there were other types of officials. After his conversion to Buddhism, Asoka arranged for tours of inspection at various parts of the empire by the Mahamatras at intervals of three to five years. The object of this arrangement was to keep

spiritually. He was ever watchful for improvement in their moral character and tried to attract their minds to religion. That is why in his inscriptions he recorded messages, and also appointed a large number of missionaries, for the moral and spiritual uplift of his subjects.

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the subjects free from misrule and oppression. Asoka also created a new class of officials known as *Dharma-Mahamatras*. They not only propagated religion but were entrusted with such important duties as watching over the judiciary etc.

The principal objective of Asoka's rule was the well-being—both material and spiritual—of his people. In one of his

Asoka's aims Rock Edicts Asoka says, "All men are my children. Just as I want to make my own children happy in this world and the next, so also do I desire the material and spiritual well-being of all men". He spared nothing to fulfil this objective. Appointing numerous efficient officials and always keeping watch over them, he gave his people the inestimable benefits of peace and good administration. He was ready, at

Measures to
translate aims
to reality

all hours of day and night, to listen to any news affecting his empire. His inscriptions embody his sincere desire to ensure that his officials are honest, kind, dutiful and dedicated to the welfare of the subjects. He relaxed the rigours of the penal code and set free time and again people convicted of some offence or other.

Asoka's greatness: Asoka occupies a unique place in the arena of history, for there was none else who matched him in all respects as a ruler of men. That he could have won renown as a conqueror is proved beyond any doubt by the Kalinga war. But this first war of his was also his last, for he gave up the sword as the weapon of conquest and took instead to the ideal of *Dharmavijaya*. Such renunciation of force and love of peace are

Foreign policy without any parallel in history. By ensuring the security of the subjects all over his vast empire and establishing relations of amity with neighbouring kings, Asoka proved that rivalry with others and war

Administration were not indispensable elements of foreign policy. He had no peer as a ruler. He dedicated his life to the material and spiritual well-being of his subjects. His boundless love of

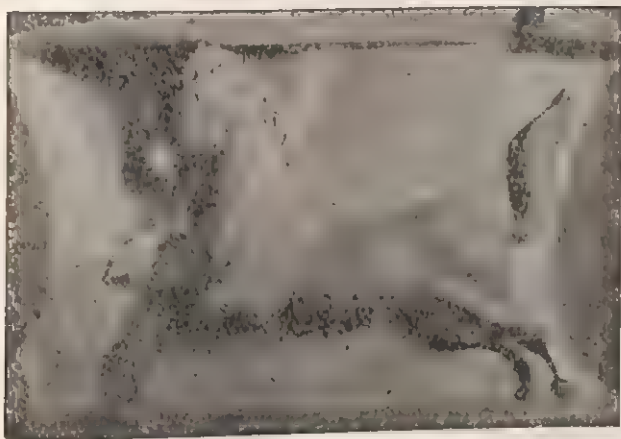
humanity was geared to the welfare of the whole of the living world. The glimpses that we have of his private life and noble mind from his inscriptions compel us to revere his memory. Though heading an empire he was not vain and given over to a life of luxury. His dedication to religion did not make him averse to the realities of practical life. Though a stern ruler, he was prompt to come to the aid of suffering humanity.

Art in the Maurya period : The powerful founder of the Maurya empire, Chandragupta, lived in a vast wooden palace at Pataliputra. The Maurya empire contained big cities besides Pataliputra. According to Megasthenes, the cities lying near the rivers had wooden structures while those situated elsewhere were built of bricks. Taxila, Ujjain, Kausambi, Bodhi Gaya, Pundranagara (possibly Mahasthanagarh in Bogura district, East Pakistan), Suvarnagiri, Tosali these were some of the large cities of the Maurya empire. We have no detailed descriptions of these cities. But the account of Megasthenes provides us with a clear picture of the vastness and splendour of Pataliputra.

Pataliputra was nearly ten miles in length and two in breadth. It had a broad and deep ditch extending to all four sides of it. An almost impregnable wall surrounded the city. This wall had 570 pillars and 34 gates. In those days all big and important cities were surrounded by ditches and walls for protection against invaders.

The remains of Chandragupta's palace have been discovered at a village called Kumrahar near Patna. This palace had one hundred large and well-polished pillars. Of these, eighty still exist. A Greek writer has observed that Chandragupta's palace eclipsed in grandeur even the palaces of the mighty rulers of Persia. In the garden inside the palace roamed tame peacocks and other birds. Beautiful groves and boweries made the garden a splendid show. There were artificial tanks in various parts of the palace, abounding

in large fishes of varied types. This Greek account attests to the level of art and love of beauty in Maurya India.



Horse (Sarnath)

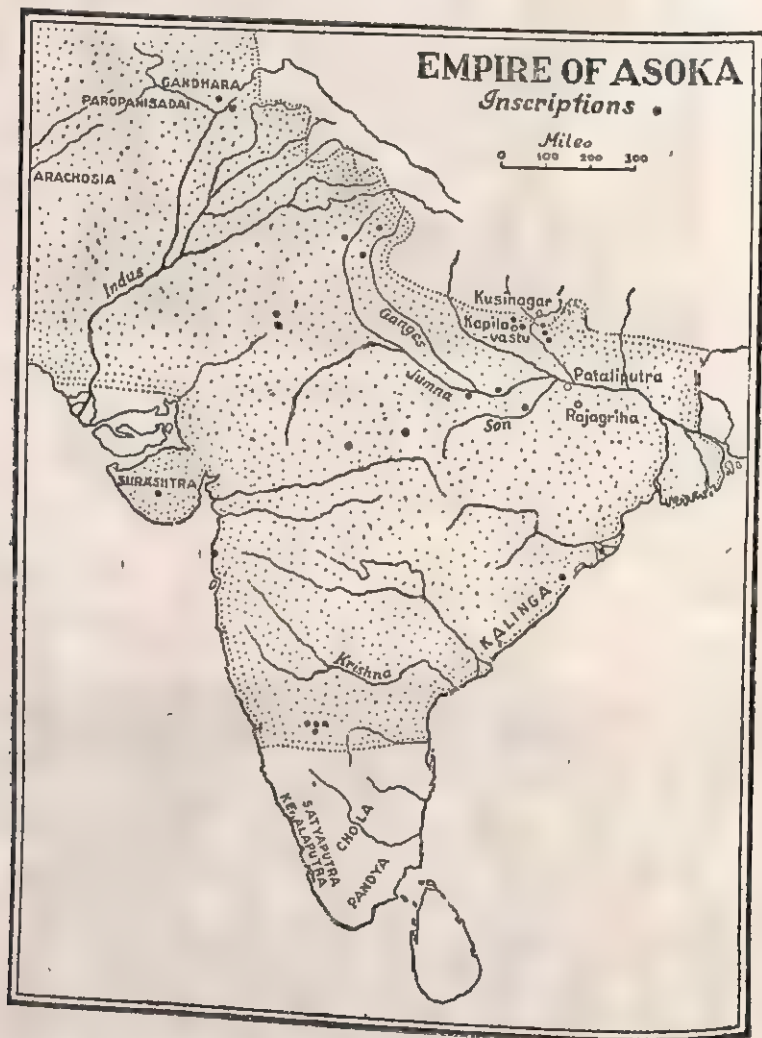
During the reign of Asoka new materials and fresh outlook infused a new life in art. It was during his time that stones began to be extensively used for house-building. If Chandragupta's palace were made of stone instead of wood, we would still have some portions of it to excite our wonder. It is due to the fact that Asoka gave up wood in favour of



Sanchi

stone that some of his achievements in building have escaped the ravages of time.

Asoka widened the area of Pataliputra and added to its prosperity. In his time stone was used for construction of portions of the royal residence. Nearly six centuries and a half after his death, the famous Chinese traveller Fa-hien came to India. He was amazed at the scale and grandeur of



Map showing places where Asoka's inscription have been found.

Asoka's palace and wrote that "such artistry is beyond the reach of humans and must be the handiwork of demons."

Asoka did not confine his attention to Pataliputra. Tradition has it that he was the founder of two cities—Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir, and Devapattan in Nepal.



Lion capital (Sarnath)

He is stated to have constructed five hundred Buddhist monasteries in Kashmir. Nearly eight centuries and a half after his death, Hiuen-Tsang, the famous Chinese traveller,

found about one hundred of these monasteries still in existence in Kāshmir. The Brahmins were also not deprived of Asoka's liberality. Some places of worship constructed in Kāshmir were

Asoka's artistic
achievements



Lauriya Nandangarh (Bihar) Pillar

dedicated to the Brahmins. There is a legend about the

founding of Devapattan. Asoka once went to Nepal, accompanied by his daughter, Charumati, and son-in-law, Devapal. There, Charumati and Devapal reclaimed an area for human habitation and constructed two monasteries for Buddhist monks and nuns. Devapattan was founded as a memorial to the royal visit.

Throughout his vast empire Asoka caused numerous Buddhist *Viharas* or monasteries to be set up. *Mahavamsa*, a famous work in Pali literature, relates the following story. One day Asoka asked his *Guru*, Moggaliputta Tissa, "How voluminous is the message of Buddha?" Tissa replied, "It is divided into 48,000 parts."



Dhauli (Orissa)—Elephant carved out of hill

Asoka said: "I shall construct one *Vihara* for each such part". He then arranged for construction of 48,000 *Viharas* in various

parts of India. Though there may be exaggeration in the story, there is no doubt that Asoka was instrumental in setting up numerous *Viharas*. Historians have unearthed the remains of some of them.

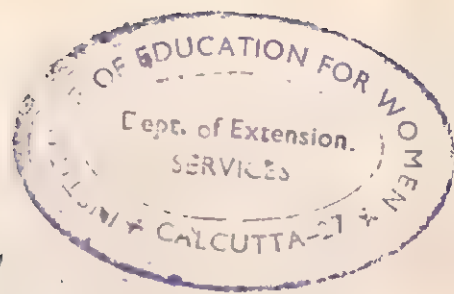
The practice of setting up *Stupas* was already prevalent before Asoka's time. Usually some portions (ashes, bones, teeth etc.) of the mortal remains of Buddha or some of the more famous Buddhist seers were enshrined in such *Stupas*. Asoka himself set up some of these and caused some others to be repaired. In this connection we must mention the famous Sanchi Stupa of Central India.

The custom of setting up pillars before palaces and temples was perhaps introduced before the time of Asoka. Asoka set up many such pillars and had his messages on *Dhamma* inscribed on them. Asokan pillars have been discovered at Delhi, Lauria Nandangarh, Allahabad, Lumbini, Sarnath and other places. Most of these are now in a broken condition. The animal figures placed on top of these pillars are unique examples of Maurya sculpture.

Some historians are of the opinion that Maurya art shows traces of Persian influence. The architectural style of the royal palace at Pataliputra and the Asokan pillars are cited as examples.

Model Questions :

1. Trace the expansion of Magadha from the earliest times to the reign of Asoka.
2. What do you know about Alexander's invasion of India? What were its effects?
3. Give a brief account of the reign of Chandra Gupta Maurya.
4. Estimate the value of Megasthenes' account of India, Kautilya's 'Arthashastra', and Asokan inscriptions as sources of the history of Maurya India.
5. Describe the Maurya system of civil administration.
6. What steps did Asoka take for propagation of Buddhism?
7. Estimate Asoka's achievements as a ruler.
8. Describe the international relations of the Maurya Emperors.
9. Discuss Asoka's place in history.
10. Write a brief essay on Maurya art.



CHAPTER 7

The post-Maurya Age

Fall of Maurya Empire : After the death of Asoka the Maurya empire became weakened and gradually fell into pieces.

Weakness of
Asoka's
successors;
Greek invasion;
end of the
Mauryas

The weakness of his successors resulted in the establishment of some independent kingdoms in north-western and southern India. Antiochos, the Greek king of West Asia, invaded India.

He did not keep any territory under his occupation, but returned to his kingdom after exacting tributes from the vanquished rulers. Nearly half a century after the death of Asoka, in or about 187 B.C., the last Maurya King, Brihadratha, was assassinated by his general Pushyamitra Sunga, who set up his dynasty on the throne of Magadha.

Some historians hold the view that Asoka's devotion to Buddhism and peaceful foreign policy led to the fall of the Maurya empire. But though a patron and propagator of Buddhism, Asoka had no dislike for other religions. Hence his preference for Buddhism did not provoke any religious animosity among his non-Buddhist subjects and could not have done any harm to his empire. The ideal of

Asoka's
responsibility

Dhammavijaya may have weakened somewhat the military might of the empire. But there was no internal rebellion and invasion from outside during his reign and the Maurya empire remained basically more or less as strong as before. In fact, the vastness of the empire made its fall inevitable. It was impossible in those days of bad communication and transport to control effectively from Pataliputra the distant provinces of the empire. Bindusara's reign saw a revolt in Taxila. Asoka's inscriptions contain hints of maladministration by provincial officials. His weak successors failed to preserve the unity of the vast empire.

The Sungas of Magadha : With the fall of the Mauryas the political unity of India came to an end ; independent kingdoms emerged in the north, the north-west and the south. In the east the Sungas came to power in Magadha—an empire much reduced in size by now. The Sungas were Brahmins. Their empire extended upto the river Narmada in the south and the river Bipasha in the north (Punjab). The principality of Vidarbha (modern Berar) in Central India accepted the suzerainty of the Sungas. Some historians are of opinion that Kharavela, the powerful king of Kalinga, attacked Magadha during the reign of Pushyamitra, but this view does not appear to be tenable. A Greek king of north-west India, either Demetrios or Menander, advanced beyond Ayodhya with a view to invading Pataliputra, but failed to proceed any further in the face of heroic resistance from the Sungas. Pushyamitra performed two *Asvamedha* sacrifices. His name occupies a prominent place among those rulers of India who played a notable role in resisting foreign invasions. Had he not checked the Greeks, their hold would not have been confined to the north-west but would have extended to the Gangetic valley.

After the death of Pushyamitra his successors occupied the throne of Magadha for some time. During the reign of one of the Sunga kings Heliodoros, an envoy from the Greek king of Taxila, who was a Vaishnava, set up a *Garuda* pillar as a symbol of the creed at Bidisha (Besnagar, Madhya Pradesh). This shows that Vaishnavism was prevalent in the Greek territories in the north-west. The famous stupa of Bharhut in Madhya Pradesh is the finest example of the art of this period. Numerous scenes—most of them depicting some incident or other from the life of Buddha—have been carved on the gates of this stupa. Bharhut is a symbol of the extent of Buddhist influence.

The Kanvas of Magadha : The Sunga dynasty was followed by the Kanvas. According to the Puranas, the Kanvas ruled over Magadha for 45 years. The founder of this dynasty, Vasudeva, came to the throne of Magadha about

75 B. C. after murdering the last of the Sungas. Magadha more or less sank into the darkness of oblivion after the fall of the Kanvas.

The Satavahana or Andhra dynasty: Among the dynasties which rose into prominence in the south during the post-Maurya period the Satavahanas need particular mention. The Puranas refer to them as 'Andhras'. This

Origin dynasty originated in Maharashtra either in the third or in the first century B. C. At first

its influence was confined to the southern portions of Madhya Pradesh and the northern regions of the south. Later on, this was extended to the Andhra region (the Godavari basin). Perhaps the Satavahanas came to be known as Andhras from that time.

Satakarni I, the first powerful king of this dynasty, performed Asvamedha after conquering eastern Malwa. His capital was Pratishthana (modern Paithan in the Aurangabad district). Perhaps he had to accept defeat from Kharavela, the powerful Kalinga king. The Satavahana dynasty became weak soon after his death, resulting in the occupation of a portion of its territory by the Sakas of Western India.

Period of Satavahana glory In the first half of the 2nd century B. C. the power and prestige of the Satavahanas were revived by Gautamiputra Satakarni who

defeated the Sakas, the Yavanas (Greeks) and the Pallavas (Parthians). His vast kingdom extended from Malwa in the north to Maharashtra in the south and Saurashtra in the west. He was a defender of the caste system. It is likely that he was defeated by Rudradaman, the Saka ruler of Ujjain.

Gautamiputra was succeeded by his son Pulumayi, who perhaps married the daughter of Rudradaman. He extended his kingdom upto the Godavari and the Krishna rivers. It was during his reign that the Andhra region came under the Satavahanas.

The last powerful ruler of this dynasty was Yajna-Sri Satakarni. He kept Satavahana rule intact over Maharashtra and Andhra. The dynasty came to an end in the third

century B. C., and the different parts of the vast Satavahana territory fell to the Abhiras, the Ikshvakus, the Pallavas and others.

Foreign rulers of north-west India: After the fall of the Mauryas north-western India ceased to be a part of the empire of Magadha and came under the Bactrian Greeks. The region lying between the Hindukush mountains and the river Oxus was known as Bactria. The weakness of the successors of Seleukos had led the Greek rulers of Parthia and Bactria to secede from the Syrian Greek empire. It is these Greek rulers who gradually extended their sway to north-western India.

Among the Greek kings of north-western India two—Demetrios and Menander—deserve particular mention. Demetrios established a big kingdom embracing portions of Afghanistan, the Punjab and Sind. His rule became confined to his Indian territories as a result of an attack from his Greek rival, Eukratides, who snatched Bactria from him. Perhaps he came into conflict with the Sunga king, Pushyamitra. Menander was by far the greatest of the Greek rulers of north-western India. His coins have been found in the region extending from Kabul to Mathura. His capital was Sakala (Sialkot in West Pakistan). He has been referred to as King Milinda in the Buddhist work *Milindapanho*. There is a tradition that he embraced Buddhism.

Taking advantage of the weakness of the Bactrian Greeks, Saka, Pallava and Kushan invaders established kingdoms in India. The nomadic Sakas, who had been driven away from Central Asia by the Yuechis, occupied Bactria and Parthia and entered India where they established their rule in the north-west and in the west. Taxila, Mathura and Ujjain were among the chief centres of Saka power. The Saka rulers used the titles *Kshatrapa* and *Mahakshatrapa*. Among them Rudradaman of Ujjain was the most prominent. The Junagadh Rock Inscription of Rudradaman describes his career in some detail. Malwa, northern Gujrat, Saurashtra, Cutch, northern Sind, Marwar (Rajputana), north Konkan—all these areas were under his rule. He had clashes with the

Satavahanas. His daughter was perhaps married to the Satavahana king, Pulumayi. Rudradaman was well-educated, a patron of learning and a good ruler.

On the decline of the Sakas north-western India came under the occupation of the Pallavas or Parthians, who hailed from Persia. The most notable among the Pallava Parthians kings of India was Gondophernes, who ruled in the first century B.C. There is a tradition that St. Thomas, a disciple of Christ, came to propagate Christianity in India and gave up his life here during the reign of Gondophernes.

Establishment of Kushan empire : In the middle of the 2nd century B. C. the Yue-chis of north-west China left that region, advanced gradually to the west and, driving out the Sakas, occupied the valley of the Oxus. The Kushans, a branch of the Yue-chis, possibly came into prominence during the first century B. C.

A Kushan king named Kujula Kadphises or Kadphises I became the ruler of the entire territory occupied by the Yuechis. He vanquished the Greeks and the Parthians and occupied Afghanistan and parts of north-western India. Among the Kushan kings, he was probably the first to issue coins with his name carved on them, south of the Hindukush mountains. He was perhaps an admirer of Buddhism. After his death his son Wema Kadphises or Kadphises II extended the power of the Kushans up to the Punjab and possibly even Uttar Pradesh. Some scholars hold that he introduced the Saka era of 78 A. D. He was a worshipper of Siva.

Kanishka : Kanishka was the greatest of the Kushans. What his relationship with the two Kadphiseses was is not known, but there is no doubt that he ruled after Kadphises II. Some scholars think that it is Kanishka who introduced the Saka era ; he must, therefore, have reigned in the first century A. D. But others hold the view that his reign fell during the period 125-150 A. D. Some, again, consider him to be a ruler of the first century B. C. or the

third century A. D. Both these latter views are, however, contradicted by evidence.



Statue of Kanishka (Mathura)

Kanishka was a great conqueror and extended his empire through conquests. Some Chinese chronicles relate the stories

of his encounters with the king of Pataliputra. His coins have been found as far as Bihar and Bengal. There is no doubt that in the east his empire extended at least up to Banaras. The eastern portions of the empire were governed by viceroys with the titles *Mahakshatrapa* and *Kshatrapa*. In Kanishka's conquests the north-west the Punjab, Sind and Kashmir were included within his empire. His capital was at Purushapura (Peshawar). Outside India, Kanishka's empire extended to Afghanistan, Bactria and Central Asia. He defeated the Bactrian Greeks. Kashgar and Khotan in Central Asia were included within his dominions. In this region extension of his rule was due to his victory over the rulers of the Celestial Empire (China). In order to recover Chinese influence in Central Asia, the Chinese emperor sent an army under the generalship of Panchao who inflicted a defeat on Kanishka. But sometime after this Kanishka defeated Panchao's son and secured a Chinese prince as a hostage at his court. No other foreign ruler of ancient India was as great an empire-builder as Kanishka. Though the long arm of the Mauryas reached Afghanistan, no Indian king was ever able to extend his dominions to Central Asia.

Like the first Kushan king of India, Kujula Kadphises, Kanishka was an admirer of Buddhism; he was, indeed, a convert. Some of his coins depict the image of Buddha. At Purushapura he erected a Buddhist Council monastery and a huge wooden tower, in which he placed some relics of Buddha. He summoned the fourth and the last great Buddhist Council in order to reconcile the differing viewpoints of the various schools of thought on Buddhism. The Council was held either in Kashmir, or in Gandhara, or in Jalandhar in the Punjab. In the history of Buddhism the reign of Kanishka plays a memorable role; it was at this time that the Buddhists became divided into two sects—*Mahayana* and *Hinayana*. Though a patron of Buddhism, Kanishka had no animosity with other religions. He paid his respects to all the divinities of the various religions professed by the subjects of his far-flung empire. His coins

depict the figures of Hindu, Greek, Zoroastrian and Elamite-gods and goddesses.

Like all other great rulers of ancient India, Kanishka was a great patron of arts and letters. His court was adorned

Literature among others by the famous Buddhist teachers: Parsva and Vasumitra, the great Buddhist poet and philosopher Asvaghosa, the immortal authority on *Ayurveda* Charaka, and the well-known philosopher Nagarjuna. The huge

Art monastery and the wooden tower constructed by Kanishka at Purushapura excited the wonder of the foreign travellers of later periods. He set up innumerable Buddhist *Viharas* and *Stupas*. Perhaps he founded some cities in north-western India. The headless statue of Kanishka found at Mathura attests to the artistic excellence of the period.

Fall of the Kushan Empire : Kanishka's death saw the beginning of the end of the Kushan empire. Among his successors the more notable are Vasishka, Huvishka and Vasudeva. However, it was during the reigns of these rulers that the Kushan empire began to shrink. In the third century A. D. Kushan rule was confined to the north western frontiers of India. During the fourth century A. D. the Kushan rulers accepted the suzerainty of the imperial Guptas.

Religion in post-Maurya age : A great many of the foreign rulers referred to above were patrons of the arts and religions of India. The famous Pali work *Milindapanho* (the questions of Milinda) contains evidence of the devotion to Buddhism of the Bactrian Greek king, Menander. The Bhagavata or Vaishnava religion made some headway among the Greeks of north-western India. The Greek envoy Heliodoros set up the Garuda pillar at Bidisha (modern Besnagar in Madhya Pradesh). Quite a large number of Saka rulers were believers in the Brahmanical religion. Among the Kushans, Kadphises I and Kanishka were Buddhists while Kadphises II and Vasudeva were worshippers of Siva. During this age, Hinduism began to assume its present shape involving worship of a variety of gods and goddesses.

India's relations in the political sphere with Central and East Asia under the Kushans led to an extension of Buddhism in those regions. In the first century A. D. Kashyapa Matanga propagated Buddhism in China.

During this period Buddhism began to undergo a profound change due to the impact which the foreign invaders, of India made on it with their strange ideas and customs. The changed form of Buddhism is known as Mahayana. It was formally established as a separate creed during the reign of Kanishka. Buddhist literature shows that Nagarjuna, one of the luminaries of the court of Kanishka, placed the Mahayana creed on a firm philosophical basis. But Mahayana was not the creation of any single man, however eminent. It was the product of a number of historical causes. Of these causes foreign influence deserves particular

Mahayana
Buddhism

mention. Another factor seems no less important. The original form of Buddhism was not wholly satisfactory to the common people, for it did not provide for image worship and lacked rituals. The average man looks upon religion as a source of emotional satisfaction rather than of dry philosophical truths. To be acceptable to the masses a religion usually requires a veneer of rituals and ceremonies through which people can express their inner hankering for some object of worship and veneration. As Buddhism spread, this difficulty began to be felt more and more. The Mahayana creed made some concessions to this frailty of human nature. It provided not only for worship of Buddha as a divinity but gradually for worship of other divinities also. The language used in the literature on Mahayana was Sanskrit instead of Pali which was the language of the early Buddhist texts. With the formal establishment of this new creed the old form of Buddhism came to be known as Hinayana. The Hinayana creed was predominant in south India and Ceylon; Mahayana in central and eastern India and in south-east Asia (Siam, Java, Sumatra).

Huien-Tsang's travel account contains a detailed description of the fourth and last great Buddhist Council held during the reign of Kanishka. Noticing the differing view-points of various

Buddhist schools of thought, Kanishka summoned this Council in order to resolve the differences. The scholars examined the different versions of the Tripitaka, resolved doubts as to its interpretation and compiled a commentary on it. It is noteworthy that a foreigner by birth presided over these deliberations. In the history of the Mahayana creed, the fourth Buddhist Council occupies a very important place, for it was here that the creed was placed on a secure philosophical ground with the help of great scholars like Nagarjuna and Asvaghosa.

Culture in the post-Maurya epoch : The patronage of the foreign rulers contributed much to the development of the literature of India. The Saka king Rudradaman himself studied grammar, logic and the *Arthashastra*. The famous Junagadh Rock Inscription of this foreign ruler was composed in Sanskrit. This shows his admiration for that language. Among the Bactrian Greeks in Taxila and other places in north-western India, the Mahabharata was eagerly read. Kanishka's love of literature has already been mentioned. The two poetical works of his court-poet Asvaghosa, *Buddhacharita* and *Saundarananda*, occupy a prominent place in Sanskrit literature. Another of Kanishka's court luminaries, Nagarjuna, expounded the Mahayana creed in his work, *Madhyama Karika*. The great work on Ayurveda, the *Charaka Samhita* of his court physician, Charaka, is a gem of Sanskrit literature and one of the greatest scientific treatises of ancient India. Patanjali, the author of the *Mahabhasya*, lived in the Sunga period.

Taxila was one of the greatest centres of learning in the East in ancient times. During the reign of Bimbisara, Jivaka, the famous physician of Magadha, studied medicine at the University of Taxila. The Jatakas frequently mention Taxila. Students from all over India as also from abroad came here to study various branches of learning. Poor students could receive education free of cost in exchange of their services to the teachers. Taxila grew in importance under the Kushans, as it lay near the centre of Kushan political power—Peshawar.

Sanskrit
literature

Taxila

The influence and patronage of the foreign rulers gave an impetus to the arts in north-western India (ancient Gandhara). In this connection sculpture needs particular mention. The Gandhara school of art produced great works of sculpture. The Greek influence is manifest in Gandhara art, but this did not make the Gandhara artists lose their originality. Images of Buddha were carved, applying the ideals and forms of Greek art. These appear in the likeness of Apollo. The drapery follows Hellenistic models. The Gandhara school of art has left its impress upon the art of Mathura.

The images of Greek gods and goddesses were depicted in the coins struck by the Greek rulers of north-western India. The coins also bore very fine images of the Greek rulers.

Expansion of external trade : During the Maurya and post-Maurya periods India's external trade expanded to many areas. Kautilya's *Arthashastra* mentions Chinese silk. However, it is very doubtful if this remark can be applied to the Maurya period. In the first century A. D., a Chinese envoy named Chang-K'ien mentions Indian traders trading in the extensive region from south-east China to north India.

China There are evidences of trade with the Yunnan area of China by land and with the Chinese mainland by sea.

In the West, India had trade relations with the vast Roman empire. The cordial relations established by the Mauryas with the Greek rulers of West Asia helped in the extension of Indian trade in that region.

Roman empire Many commodities were exported from the ports on the western coast of India to the Asiatic dominions of Seleukos and his successors. Indian goods also found a ready market in Egypt. With the extension of the Roman empire in the first century B. C. to West Asia and Egypt, there was a marked increase in trade with those regions. The prosperous Roman cities had a great demand for various articles of luxury from India. Numerous Roman coins have been found in South India. The remains of a Roman trading outpost have been found at Arikmedu near Pondicherry. Trade was carried on

both by land and by sea. The main port on the west coast which handled foreign trade was called 'Barygaza' by the Greek writers. On land goods used to be transported from north-western India to West Asia *via* Parthia.

Model Questions :

1. Give a brief account of the Kushans in India.
2. Sketch the career of the greatest of the Kushan rulers in India.
3. Discuss the principal religious changes in the post-Maurya age.
4. Write notes on : (a) Pushyamitra Sunga, (b) the Satavahana Dynasty, (c) Rudradaman.

CHAPTER 8

The Gupta Age

The fall of the Maurya empire led to political disunity in India and parts of the country remained under foreign rule for a long period. In the 4th century A.D. the establishment of a vast empire by the Gupta dynasty of Magadha resulted in a partial recovery of India's political unity and glory.

Rise of the Guptas : Chandra Gupta I (c. 320-330 A. D.) : Nothing reliable is so far known as to the origin of the Guptas. The dynasty was founded by a person called 'Gupta'. He was probably a Vaishya and the ruler of a small principality in Magadha. His grandson Chandra Gupta laid the foundation of the future glory of the Guptas. Chandra Gupta ascended the throne in 320 A. D., the initial year of the Gupta Era. He had his capital at Pataliputra and his dominions extended to Prayaga (Allahabad) and Ayodhya. He married a Lichchhavi princess of Vaisali named Kumradevi. This alliance perhaps increased the power of Chandra Gupta. He demonstrated his might by assuming the title of 'Maharajadhiraja'.

Samudra Gupta (c. 330-380 A. D.) : After the death of Chandra Gupta I his son Samudra Gupta succeeded to his throne as his nominee. Samudra Gupta was the son of the

Lichchhavi princess Kumaradevi. He was the greatest of the imperial Guptas and occupies a very prominent place in ancient Indian history. The might of his arms has led a British historian to describe him as the "Napoleon of India". He had no peer in bravery, administrative skill, regard for religion and love of literature.

Chandra Gupta I ruled over a small kingdom extending from Magadha to Ayodhya. This small kingdom was converted by Samudra Gupta to a vast empire through his military power. The Allahabad Pillar Inscription contains details of Samudra Gupta's conquests. The poet, Harishena, who composed it, belonged to the court of Samudra Gupta.

The kings defeated by Samudra Gupta have been listed in the Allahabad Pillar Inscription. Among such kings of Northern India were Achyuta, Nagasena, Rudradeva, Matila, Nagadatta, Chandravarman, Ganapati Naga, Nandi and Balavarman. The territories

ruled by these kings cannot be identified with any degree of certainty. It would, however, seem that the areas captured by Samudra Gupta from these kings included

(1) Northern India

(2) The South Rohilkhand in U. P. and Eastern Malwa. In

his southern campaigns he defeated Mahendra, Vyaghraraja, Mantaraja, Mahendragiri, Svamidatta, Damana, Vishnugopa, Nilaraja, Hastivarman and other kings. In the South Samudra Gupta probably advanced up to Kanchi, the capital of the Pallavas. But he did not establish his direct rule over the conquered territories; he restored these to their former rulers on condition of their accepting the suzerainty of Magadha. This policy was perhaps dictated by the consideration that it was almost impossible to rule directly over territories in the distant South from Magadha.



Coin of Samudra Gupta commemorating performance of Asvamedha

In the east Samudra Gupta's sovereignty extended to

Kamarupa (West Assam), Davaka (Nowgong in Assam),
 (3) The East Samatata (South-East Bengal) and Nepal. In
 (4) The North- the north-west Kartripura (Garhwal in U. P.
 west and Jalandhar in the Punjab) and several
 tribes of the Punjab, Malwa and Western India such as the
 Malavas, Yaudheyas, Abhiras, etc. submitted to him. Besides
 these, the Saka and Kushan rulers of north-west India also paid
 homage to Samudra Gupta. Meghavarna, the king of
 Ceylon Ceylon, was his loyal ally. After the
 successful completion of his *Digvijaya*,
 Samudra Gupta celebrated the establishment of his empire by
 performing the *Asvamedha* sacrifice.

Samudra Gupta was a Brahmanical Hindu and his patronage
 increased the influence of the faith. His performance of
 Religion *Asvamedha* is an evidence of this. The
 revival of the Brahmanical faith which began
 under the Sungas reached its culmination under the Guptas.
 However, neither Samudra Gupta nor any of his successors was
 intolerant of Buddhism. They always rewarded merit, irres-
 pective of religion.

Samudra Gupta was a patron of Sanskrit literature and



Coin of Samudra Gupta
 playing the lute

Literature himself a poet
 and music and musician.

The Allahabad
 Pillar Inscription compo-
 sed by Harishena describes
 Samudra Gupta as the *Kavi-
 raja*. Some of his coins

depict him playing the lute. There is no doubt that he was a
 versatile genius.

Chandra Gupta II Vikramaditya (c. 380-413 A.D.):
 Chandra Gupta II was selected by his father Samudra Gupta
 as best fitted to succeed him. He assumed the
 title of 'Vikramaditya'. Some historians
 consider him to be the famous Vikramaditya
 of legend and tradition. The legendary king Vikramaditya
 ruled in Ujjain and came to be known as 'Sakari' by

Legendary Vikra-
 maditya?

defeating the Sakas. Though Chandra Gupta II had his capital at Pataliputra, he has also been described as the ruler of Ujjain. That he vanquished the Sakas of Western India is a definite historical fact. He wrested Malwa and Saurashtra (Kathiawad)

Victory over
Sakas



Map showing extent of the empire of the
Guptas

from the Sakas and brought the sceptre of the imperial Guptas to the shores of the Arabian Sea. In Central India he married princess Kuveranaga of the Naga dynasty with a view to increasing his power. He gave his daughter, Prabhavati, in marriage to the Vakataka king of Berar. Perhaps he founded a second

Alliance with
Vakatakas

capital at Ujjain in order to consolidate his power in western India after his victory over the Sakas. The court of the legendary king Vikramaditya was supposed to have been graced by the celebrated *navaratna* (nine gems), among whom were the great poet Kalidasa and the famous astronomer Varahamihira. In actual fact, however, Varahamihira



Coin of Chandra Gupta II

belonged to the 6th century A.D., but Kalidasa was presumably a contemporary of Chandra Gupta II. All the nine gems comprising the *navaratna* did not belong

to the same period. There is no doubt that Chandra Gupta II was a patron of learning. The poet Virasena was his minister.

Fa-hien : During the reign of Chandra Gupta II the Chinese traveller Fa-hien visited India. He was a Buddhist and he came to India through almost inaccessible routes with the object of learning more about his faith. The account that he has left us provides valuable information about the system of administration and the religious and social systems obtaining in India in his time. He stayed here nearly fifteen years (399-414 A.D.). After the conclusion of his travels he sailed home from the port of Tamralipti (Tamluk).

Fa-hien resided at Pataliputra for three years and learned Sanskrit. At that time there were two large Buddhist monasteries at Pataliputra. Students flocked there from all over India. The ruins of Asoka's palace at Pataliputra excited the wonder of Fa-hien and led him to remark that it must have been the handiwork of spirits, and not of human architects. There were charitable institutions and dispensaries in Magadha.

Fa-hien recorded considerable details about Madhyadesha (U.P.). The Brahmanical faith was professed more extensively in that region than Buddhism, but there was no religious intolerance. Buddhism predominated in the Punjab and Bengal. The Chandalas were

Object of
journey

Pataliputra and
Magadha

Religion

treated as untouchables and had to reside outside the city area. People lived a life of happiness and peace. The officials were not oppressive. The Administration penal code was rather lenient. Tamralipti was a famous port. From here large vessels sailed for Ceylon, Java and other places.

Kumara Gupta I Mahendraditya (c. 415-455 A.D.):
After the death of Chandra Gupta II his son Kumara Gupta ascended the throne of Pataliputra and assumed the title of 'Mahendraditya'. He performed, like Samudra Pushyamitras Gupta, the Asvamedha sacrifice. From the Himalayas to the Narmada and from North Bengal to Saurashtra—the vast land mass was included in his empire. Towards the close of his reign the Gupta power was threatened by the Pushyamitras, a tribe living probably in the Narmada valley. His son Skanda Gupta freed the Gupta empire from this danger.

Skanda Gupta Vikramaditya (c. 455-467 A.D.):
After the death of Kumara Gupta I, Skanda Gupta came to the throne of the Guptas and took the title of 'Vikramaditya'. He had to resist the Hun invasion of 'Vikramaditya'. He had to resist the attack of the savage Huns. The Huns invaded the north-western frontiers of the Gupta empire, but Skanda Gupta put up a stiff resistance and beat them off. Among the Indian rulers who successfully resisted foreign invasion and saved the independence of the country Skanda Gupta has a high place.

Fall of the Guptas : The fall of the Gupta empire began with the death of Skanda Gupta. The Huns succeeded in occupying the Punjab and Central India. New kingdoms began to be set up in different parts of the Gupta empire. Though the Guptas continued to rule one area or another till the 6th century A.D., none of them could put back the dynasty in its old position of power and glory. Adityasena, who belonged to a group of rulers known as the 'Later Guptas', set up a large kingdom in the 7th century, but we do not know what was the relation, if any, between the earlier and the 'Later Guptas'.

Gupta administration : The inscriptions of the imperial Guptas and Fa-hien's account throw light on the Gupta system of administration. Under the Guptas the republican system faded away and monarchy became stronger. The will of the Gupta emperor was not limited by law or in any other way. The sovereign was known as 'the supreme deity.' However, the Gupta rulers were not despotic or oppressive. It was their aim to foster the well-being of their subjects by governing according to the injunctions of the scriptures and the social customs and conventions. The sovereign needed the help and advice of ministers. Foreign relations were looked after by a minister with the title 'Sandhi-Vigrahika'. The office of the ministers was often hereditary. The great extent of the empire resulted in its division into a number of provinces (*desas*, *bhuktis* etc.) for convenience of administration. These provinces were subdivided into districts (*pradesas* or *vishayas*). The head of the village administration was known as 'Gramika'. The royal revenues usually amounted to one-sixth of the produce of the land. The penal code was less severe than that under the Mauryas. Fa-hien has stated that even in cases of acts of disloyalty against the sovereign, death sentence was not given ; only the right hand was cut off. Other offences simply carried fines.

Social system under the Guptas : As the Brahmanical faith was very powerful under the Guptas, the social customs were naturally moulded by its ideals. The caste system was becoming more and more rigid and inter-caste marriages were rare. The Brahmins occupied the dominating position in society. The untouchables like the Chandalas had to reside at the outskirts of the city. Slavery was practised. The custom of marrying girls at an early age was becoming more frequent. Though the girls of the higher castes and prosperous families received some education, the status of women in general was coming down.

Economic condition under the Guptas : For various reasons the country was economically well off under the Guptas. The able rule of the Guptas ensured peace ; there was no fear of foreign invasion as during the post-Maurya period. Trade,

commerce and agriculture developed. As a result, there was increasing prosperity in the country and a marked improvement in the standard of living of the upper classes.

Fa-hien has spoken of the wealth of North India, particularly Magadha. The chief industries were weaving, ivory products and ornaments made of precious metals. There was a marked expansion of foreign trade. There were a number of large ports on the east and west coasts of India. It appears from Fa-hien's account that large merchant vessels sailed for Ceylon, Indonesia, Indo-China and other places from the port of Tamralipti (Tamluk in Midnapore). The ports on the west coast were the starting points of trade with West Asia, Egypt, etc. Varieties of spices, fine clothes, ivory, precious metals etc. were exported to foreign lands. The imports included horses from Arabia and Persia, copper, gold and silver from Tibet, etc. Prosperous merchants exercised great influence in society. They used to come together and form guilds for safeguarding their interests.

Gupta civilization : The civilization of India under the imperial Guptas occupies a very prominent place in the cultural history of the country. The unity which the Guptas imposed over a large part of the country lasted nearly a century and a half. Their able administration established peace and harmony all over the country. The fear of foreign invasion no longer disturbed the memory of the Indian people. Expansion of trade resulted in increasing prosperity. There was an exchange of ideas with the Roman empire and China.

Some historians hold the view that there was a renaissance of Hindu religion and culture under the Guptas, and a corresponding decline in Buddhism and Buddhist culture. This opinion cannot be accepted in toto. The rule of the Mauryas did not lead to a decline of Hinduism and Hindu culture. In the post-Maurya age many foreigners became converts to Hinduism, the Asvamedha sacrifice was performed by quite a number of kings and there were valuable additions to Sanskrit literature. It will, therefore, be wrong to assume that the patronage of the Guptas infused new

Causes of progress in civilization

Hindu renaissance ?

life into a moribund Hindu civilization. However, there is no doubt that under them Hindu religion and culture reached the pinnacle.

Under the Guptas the old Brahmanical faith was gradually taking the shape in which we know it to-day. The Vaishnava or the Bhagavata form of Hinduism came into prominence during their rule. The Guptas were followers of this creed. Chandra Gupta II took the title of 'Parama Bhagavata.' Probably royal patronage facilitated spread of the Vaishnava creed on a large scale. The cult of *avatara* (incarnation of God) also began to be popular with the Hindus. Worship of Siva, Kartikeya, Surya, Lakshmi, Parvati and a host of other gods and goddesses became a distinct feature of religious life. The Puranas and the Smritis assumed their present shape under the Guptas. Buddhism began to be transformed and gradually absorbed into Hinduism. This was the beginning of the decline of Buddhism in India.

Strengthening
of Hinduism

Decline of
Buddhism

The Gupta period is the golden age of Sanskrit literature. Samudra Gupta was himself a poet. Chandra Gupta II was the patron of the *navaratna*. Harishena and Virasena, who belonged respectively to the courts of Samudra Gupta and Chandra Gupta II, were famous poets. The great poet Kalidasa was probably a contemporary of Chandra Gupta II. His epics like *Raghuvamsam* and *Kumara-sambhavam* and dramas like *Abhijnana-Sakuntalam* are gems of world literature. Sudraka, author of the drama *Mrichchha-katikam*, Visakhadatta, author of the drama *Mudra-Rakshasam*, the great astronomers Aryabhata, Varahamihira and Brahma Gupta and other literary figures were the ornaments of the Gupta period. The Puranas and the Smritis, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata were revised and enlarged into new versions in the Gupta age. The Gupta inscriptions are in Sanskrit and some of these are poetical compositions of high merit. Music was a great favourite; the image of Samudra Gupta playing the lute, as depicted on his coins, is ample testimony of such love of music.

Progress of
Sanskrit

The progress in the literary field during the Gupta age was not confined to scriptures, epics and dramas alone. What is known to-day as science also formed the subject of discussion to the savants of the period. In the science of Ayurveda, Bagbhata ranks below Charaka and Sushruta only; he probably belonged to the 7th century. The famous astronomer Varahamihira was a product of the 6th century. His predecessor in astronomy, Aryabhata, was born in the 5th century. That the science of metallurgy rose to great heights under the Guptas is amply borne out by the famous Iron Pillar at Delhi. This pillar, probably constructed in the time of Chandra Gupta II, has not rusted even now, though many centuries have since rolled away.

The Guptas ushered in a golden age in the history of Indian art. The style that prospered on their encouragement and patronage was not confined to India.

Art Its influence was felt in the art of Burma, Siam and Cambodia.

Sculpture rose to great heights under the Guptas. They were patrons of Hinduism and naturally set up numerous images of Hindu gods and goddesses and temples. Gupta sculpture mainly depicted the human form. Flora and



Gupta pillar

fauna found a very prominent place in the sculptures of

Bharhut and Sanchi, but these are no longer present so massively in the sculpture of the Gupta period. Mathura and Sarnath were the main centres of Gupta sculpture. The images of Buddha and the Bodhisattvas carved in stone are unique in form, polish and expression.

From the point of view of architectural skill the caves of Ajanta and Ellora deserve our highest praise. Such caves are also found at Bagh and Udaygiri in Madhya Pradesh.

Architecture The caves at Udaygiri and Badami (Bijapur district in Maharashtra) are really temples associated with the Brahmanical faith, and not Buddhist *chaityas* or *viharas*. The temples of the Gupta period are excellent in skill of construction and beauty. Hiuen-Tsang describes numerous temples scattered all over India. The



Mother and child (Ajanta painting)

tragedy is that most of these are in ruins. Lovers of art have expressed their admiration for the temple of Dashavatara at Deogarh in the Jhansi district of U. P.

The frescoes of Ajanta are magnificent in their loveliness. Most of the frescoes depict various phases of the lives of Buddha and the ancient kings as also the Jataka stories. These were painted during the period from the 1st or 2nd century A. D. to the end of the 6th century A. D. Fine examples of Gupta painting are found in the caves of Bagh and Badami.

The Huns : The Hiung-nu, who had driven out the Yueh-chi from China, are known in Indian literature and epigraphy as Hunś. They were ferocious savages. They attacked the western part of the Gupta empire early in Skanda Gupta's reign, but were beaten back by the powerful Gupta emperor. After the death of Skanda Gupta the Huns again swooped down upon India and this time they succeeded in destroying the empire of the Guptas. Towards the closing decades of the 6th century A. D. the Hun leader, Toramana, exercised authority over the extensive territory from the Punjab to Malwa. His son, Mihirakula, was a persecutor of Buddhism and destroyed many Buddhist monasteries and *stupas*. His capital was Sakala (Sialkot in West Pakistan). Narasimha Gupta Baladitya of the Gupta dynasty and Yasodharman of Dasapura in Malwa defeated Mihirakula (about 532 A. D.). This probably freed Central India from Hun terror. Anyhow, after these defeats the Huns ceased to be a serious threat. Mihirakula took shelter in Kashmir and seized the throne by treachery. His reign probably came to an end towards the middle of the 6th century.

After the death of Mihirakula the political prominence of the Huns declined for lack of able leadership; however, it did not vanish totally. Gradually the Huns took to Indian religion and language and were in course of time absorbed into the Hindu society.

Political disunity in North India : The unity established by the imperial Guptas began to crumble after the death of Skanda Gupta and several dynasties rose in different parts of North India.

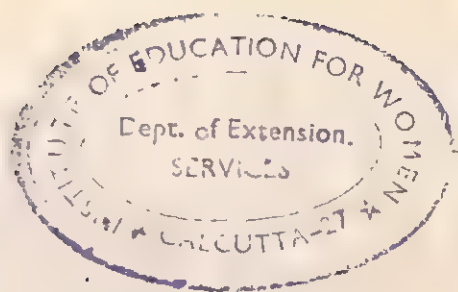
The Maitrakas ruled over Saurashtra. Their capital Valabhi was a great centre of learning.

Yasodharman of Mandasor in Malwa defied his Gupta suzerain and ruled over his kingdom independently. One of his inscriptions informs us that his authority extended from the Brahmaputra in the east to the Arabian Sea in the west and the Himalayas in the north to the Eastern Ghats in the south. Though this description is obviously an exaggeration, there is no doubt that this conqueror of the Huns was a powerful monarch. His greatest achievement was his victory over Mihirakula. His power must have been short-lived, for he was not able to set up a dynasty.

After the fall of the Gupta empire the Maukharis occupied an important place in North India. The main branch of the family ruled at Kanauj. Two other branches ruled in Bihar and Rajasthan. Isanavarman of Kanauj assumed imperial titles towards the middle of the 6th century. He claimed victories over the Andhras and the Gaudas. The Maukharis and the 'Later Guptas' were rivals. Grahavarman of the Maukhari dynasty married Rajyasri, the daughter of Prabhakarvardhan of Thaneswar. To oppose alliance between Kanauj and Thaneswar Deva Gupta, one of the 'Later Gupta' rulers of Malwa, formed a counter-alliance with Sasanka, the king of the Gaudas. A combined attack from Sasanka and Deva Gupta resulted in the death of Grahavarman; the Maukhari kingdom later on became part of the kingdom of Harshavardhan of Thaneswar.

Model Questions :

1. Briefly narrate the history of the Gupta dynasty.
2. Give an estimate of the achievements of Samudra Gupta.
3. Briefly describe the reign of Chandra Gupta II. What light is thrown on the state of the country by Fa-hien?
4. Give some account of the state of civilization in the Gupta period.
5. Say what you know about the account of Fa-hien.
6. Draw a sketch map of India to indicate the extent of the Gupta Empire at its height.
7. Write short note on—Skanda Gupta.
8. Who were the Huns? Write an account of their inroads and conquests in India.



CHAPTER 9

The Post-Gupta Age

Pushyabhuti dynasty of Thaneswar : It was probably towards the close of the 5th century A.D. or the beginning of the 6th that the Pushyabhuti dynasty rose to power in the eastern part of the Punjab. The capital of their small kingdom was Thaneswar. Towards the close of the 6th century A. D. Prabhakarvardhan, the first important ruler of the dynasty, defeated such foreign invaders as the Huns and the Gurjaras and probably extended his influence as far as Malwa and Gujarat.

Prabhakarvardhan gave his daughter, Rajyasri, in marriage to Grahavarman, the Maukhari king of Kanauj. This alliance between the two principal dynasties of North India led to major changes in the political scene.

Fall of Maukharis The powerful king of Gauda, Sasanka, joined hands with the 'Later Gupta' king of Malwa, Deva Gupta, who was an enemy of the Maukharis, and together they attacked Kanauj. Grahavarman was defeated and killed. His widow, Rajyasri, the Thaneswar princess, was made a prisoner in Kanauj.

Death of Rajyavardhan Prabhakarvardhan had already died and had been succeeded by his eldest son, Rajyavardhan.

On receiving information of the tragedy that had overtaken the Maukharis, he advanced with an army and defeated Deva Gupta, but Sasanka brought about his death, perhaps by treachery.

Harshavardhan (606-647 A. D.) : The death of Grahavarman had left the throne of Kanauj vacant. Now the death of Rajyavardhan left Thaneswar also without a king. The ministers of the two kingdoms now made Harshavardhan, the younger brother of Rajyavardhan, their ruler. It was perhaps in 606 A. D. that Harshavardhan thus came to occupy the thrones of Kanauj and Thaneswar. The

Harsha Era Harsha Era started from this year. This union of the two kingdoms under a single head led to the rise

of a great and powerful state in the northern Gangetic valley.

Rise of Kanauj Harshavardhan transferred his capital from Thaneswar to Kanauj. It was from this time that Kanauj came to be regarded as the principal city of Northern India. The glory of Pataliputra had faded with the fall of the Guptas.

Rescue of Rajyasri Rajyasri, the sister of Harshavardhan, had been made a prisoner at the time of the defeat of Grahavarman of Kanauj at the hands of Sasanka and Deva Gupta. Some time after this, she had been released and had retired to the Vindhya forests. After ascending the throne Harsha started a vigorous search for her and found her at last. Later on, Rajyasri used to help her brother in conducting the affairs of state.

Harsha was determined to take his revenge on Sasanka for the murder of Rajyavardhan and with this end in view he entered into an alliance with Bhaskaravarman, the king of Kamarupa (Assam). It is not known whether Harsha succeeded in this. It would seem that Sasanka ruled independently at least upto 619 A. D. and died sometime before 637 A. D.

Clash with Sasanka Possibly after his death, his capital Karnasuvarna (in Murshidabad) was occupied by Bhaskaravarman and Harshavardhan himself seized Magadha, taking the title of 'Magadharaja'. Harsha is also said to have occupied North Bengal.

Occupation of Magadha and North Bengal Harsha tried to establish a vast empire, but succeeded only partially. He conquered the Kongoda region (Ganjam district, Orissa). Dhruvasena, the ruler of Valabhi in

Conquests Saurashtra or Kathiawad, was defeated by him. But in the Deccan Pulakesin II, the Chalukya king of Vatapi, halted his advance and Harsha could not extend his dominions beyond the Narmada. The eastern region of the Punjab, as also U. P., Bihar, North Bengal and Orissa formed parts of his empire. The rulers of Kamarupa and Valabhi acknowledged his suzerainty. Inscriptions refer to him as the "master of the whole of *Uttarapatha*". This is no doubt an exaggeration.

There was close connection between India and China in the time of Harsha. Hiuen Tsang, the celebrated Chinese traveller, visited India during his reign. In 641 A. D. Harsha sent a Brahmin envoy to the court of the Chinese emperor. A Chinese cultural mission visited his court sometime after this.

Harsha was an able ruler and looked personally into administrative affairs. According to Hiuen Tsang, "he was indefatigable and the day was too short for him". The Empire was divided into a number of *Bhuktis* or *Pradesas*, which Administration were in turn divided into *Vishayas* or districts.

Taxation was light. The cultivators had to pay only one-sixth of their produce towards royal revenues. The penal code was harsher than at the time of the Guptas, but could not still eliminate entirely acts of crime. Hiuen Tsang has, however, attested to the excellent character of the Indians. He says: "They will not take anything wrongfully. They fear the retribution which others meet for their sins and take appropriate lessons from such incidents. They do not practise deceit and they keep their sworn obligation." It seems as if the Chinese traveller was echoing exactly what had been stated by Megasthenes a thousand years back.

Like all great monarchs of ancient India, Harsha was a great patron of learning and literature. Hiuen-Tsang has stated that one-fourth of the revenues from the Crown lands was kept apart for rewarding scholars and writers. Harsha's court was adorned by the famous author of *Kadambari* and *Harshacharita*, Banabhatta. *Kadambari* is a priceless treasure of Sanskrit prose.

Patronage of learning and literature - *Harshacharita* narrates the incidents of the early part of Harsha's reign. Harsha himself wrote three well-known dramas—*Ratnavali*, *Priyadarsika* and *Nagananda*. He made generous contributions to the Nalanda University for encouragement of higher studies.

Harsha was a worshipper of Siva at first and leaned later

towards Buddhism. This was perhaps due to the influence of Rajyasri and Hiuen Tsang. He set up many Buddhist stupas and forbade killing of animals. Harsha used to summon Buddhist sramanas to councils for discussion of the tenets of Buddhism. In the grand assembly at Kanauj, described by Hiuen Tsang, he showed some partiality for the *Mahayana* faith. But he did not embrace Buddhism formally and did not cease to show his reverence for the Hindu gods and goddesses. He used to honour Siva and Surya (Aditya) in the assemblies at Prayaga.

Like Asoka, Harshavardhan has become immortal in history for his humanitarian activities. He set up numerous charitable dispensaries and public resting places. It was his desire to ensure food and rest for all wayfarers, irrespective of religion or creed. Hiuen Tsang's account attests to his magnificent acts of charity.

Hiuen Tsang : Hiuen Tsang, the famous Chinese traveller, visited India during the reign of Harshavardhan. He came to India via Tashkent and Samargand in Central Asia and was in this country for fourteen years (630-644 A.D.) travelling extensively in the North and South. He became a friend of Harsha and lived in his empire for eight years. His account is a veritable mine of information for the India of his time. In fact, it constitutes one of our principal sources for a glimpse into our ancient history. It is impossible to exaggerate the debt that ancient Indian history owes to Hiuen Tsang.

Hiuen Tsang has expressed his great admiration for Harsha's might, his concern for the well-being of his subjects and his charities. He has given an account of Harsha's *digvijaya*. He has also recorded details of Harsha's administrative system and humanitarian activities. Hiuen Tsang was amazed at the scale of Harsha's charities. At the end of every five years Harsha used to celebrate a solemn festival at Prayaga (Allahabad) at the

sacred confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna. In this festival, extending for a period of 75 days, Harsha showed his reverence for Buddha, Aditya and Siva and gave generously to all, irrespective of creed or religion. All the wealth accumulated during the five preceding years was distributed in charities. Then Harsha gave away his own riches and even his personal belongings. He would then accept a rather ordinary garment from Rajyasri, wear it and pay homage to Buddha. Such charity has no parallel in Indian history.

During the reign of Harsha Kanauj occupied the place in North India formerly enjoyed by Pataliputra. Hiuen Tsang has described the city as five miles in length and one and a half miles in breadth. The city was adorned by many Buddhist monasteries and Hindu temples. Harsha summoned a grand assembly of religions at Kanauj. This was attended by many Buddhist monks, Brahmins, Jains and twenty tributary rulers. Every day there was a large procession with an image of Buddha in it. The participants in the assembly discussed religious matters.

At the conference Harsha showed some partiality for the *Mahayana* school of Buddhism. This angered the Brahmins, some of whom made an attempt to murder him.

Like Megasthenes and other foreign observers of the Indian scene, Hiuen Tsang was particularly impressed by the moral character of the people.

It appears from the account of Hiuen Tsang that Buddhism was gradually losing ground during this period. The Brahmanical faith predominated and the chief gods were Aditya, Siva and Vishnu. Jainism had some popular backing only in North Bihar, North and East Bengal. The influence of the Brahmins was making the caste system more rigid than before.

Nalanda University : Hiuen Tsang saw the ruins of the palace at Pataliputra. The city was gradually declining owing to the shifting of the centre of political gravity of North India

to Kanauj. A famous University was situated at Nalanda. Hiuen Tsang himself studied at the Nalanda University for several years. He has stated that there were numerous centres of learning in India, but none could compare with Nalanda. Here ten thousand students studied various subjects. The course included study of religious literature, both Buddhist and Brahmanical. Besides scriptures, the subjects taught included Grammar, Logic, Ayurveda and Mathematics. Students flocked here from all over Asia. The famous Bengali scholar, Silabhadra, was the head of the University. Hiuen Tsang studied directly under him. The students resided in large buildings. The liberality of Harsha and other rulers provided the necessary funds for the University. Hiuen Tsang has stated that generations of rulers not only arranged construction of large residential buildings and lecture halls, but supplied all the material necessities of the vast body of the teachers and the taught. The revenues of about one hundred villages were utilised for the purpose and two hundred residents of those villages supplied in turn the daily needs of the inmates of the University. The story of Nalanda is a glorious chapter in the ancient history of our land.

Decline of Kanauj : After the death of Harsha his empire fell into pieces. There was no powerful ruler able to resist foreign aggression and this was naturally an invitation to invaders from outside. After Harsha's death the throne of Kanauj was occupied by his minister, Arjun. An army sent by Strong-tsan Gampo, the powerful King of Tibet, defeated Arjun and took him prisoner. Parts of North Bihar were probably under Tibetan rule for some time.

In the first half of the 8th century A. D. the throne of Kanauj was occupied by a powerful monarch named Yasovarman. Vakpati, his court poet, has related the story of Yasovarman's *divijaya* in the east, south and west in his poetical work, *Gaudavaho*. There is, however, little historical evidence in support of such a tale. Yasovarman was the patron of the famous dramatist Bhavabhuti, the author of *Uttararamacharita*.

Yasovarman probably sent an envoy to China. Towards the middle of the 8th century A. D. he was defeated and killed by Lalitaditya, the King of Kashmir.

Dynasties of ancient Bengal : Bengal had been a part of the empire of the Mauryas and the Guptas. In the 6th century A. D., after the fall of the Guptas, two independent kingdoms—Samatata or Banga and Gauda—rose into prominence in Bengal. Samatata comprised east and south and parts of west Bengal. Three kings of Samatata are known to history—Gopachandra, Dharmaditya and Samacharadeva. Gauda comprised the whole of North Bengal and the northern areas of West Bengal. Magadha was annexed to this kingdom during the reign of Sasanka.

Sasanka : Sasanka occupies a major place in the history of ancient Bengal. No other king of Bengal before him was able to extend his dominions beyond its borders.

History has no record of the family history and early life of Sasanka. It is not also known how he came to occupy the throne of Gauda. It is, however, certain that he attained to kingship before 606 A. D. His capital was at Karnasuvarna (six miles south-west of Berhampore in Murshidabad district). His kingdom included the whole of North and West Bengal, Magadha and probably East Bengal. His dominions extended to the Chilka Lake (*i.e.*, ancient Kongoda region) in Orissa.

Extent of his
kingdom

The story of Sasanka's conflict with the Maukhari and Pushyabhuti dynasties has already been related. He was able to maintain his power and position in spite of his clashes with Harshavardhan and Bhaskaravarman of Kamarupa. But his kingdom fell to pieces after his death. Magadha and North Bengal came under Harsha's rule and Karnasuvarna was occupied by Bhaskaravarman.

Political
conflicts

According to Hiuen Tsang, the famous Chinese traveller, Sasanka was a persecutor of Buddhism. He is stated to have cut down the famous Bodhi tree of Bodh Gaya and practised various forms of oppression on the Buddhists. In view of the fact that Hiuen Tsang was himself a

Religion

Buddhist and a friend of Sasanka's great enemy, Harshavardhan, we must take his charges against Sasanka with a grain of salt. Sasanka was a worshipper of Siva. Perhaps his patronage gave an impetus to the Brahmanical faith.

History of Orissa : Asoka's conquest of Kalinga is a memorable event of Indian history. Kalinga regained its independence some time after his death. There is a rock inscription at Udaygiri hill three miles from Bhubaneswar. This relates the story of the conquests of Kharavela, the king of Kalinga.

The dynasty of Kharavela is known as 'Cheti' or 'Chedi'. The rock inscription at Udaygiri is usually known as the Hathigumpha Inscription. It does not mention any date. However, scholars think that it was inscribed in the first or third century B.C. when Kharavela was the ruler of Kalinga. Kharavela had already before his accession acquired a good knowledge of Mathematics, Economics, etc. After coming to the throne he led his armies twice to North India and probably compelled the then King of Magadha to accept his suzerainty. He attacked the Satavahana and Pandya Kingdoms in the south and the west. His capital was at Kalinganagara. He was a Jain. He built some cave-rooms at Udaygiri hill for the accommodation of Jain monks. Nothing is known about the last years of his life or his successors in Kalinga.

No powerful dynasty followed Kharavela in Kalinga for a long time. Kalinga (including Kongoda or Ganjam district) submitted to Sasanka and Harshavardhan. Later on different dynasties ruled in different parts of Kalinga. Though the suzerainty of one of these dynasties was generally acknowledged by the others, the regional dynasties never lost their power altogether.

The Soma dynasty of Kosala ruled between 1000 and 1100 A. D. approximately. The enmity of the Kalachuri dynasty drove them away from the Chhatrisgarh area and their power became confined to Orissa.

The Kara dynasty of Tosali ruled from the 8th to the 11th century A. D. Most of the inscriptions of this Kara dynasty have been found at Cuttack, Puri and Ganjam districts.

The Bhanja Kings ruled over Orissa and the northern areas of Ganjam for nearly three or four centuries. Bhanja Kings They appear to have been powerful from the 10th to the 14th century.

Among the various dynasties of Orissa, the Gangas were the most famous and powerful. They ruled in the Ganga dynasty Ganjam area from the 7th century. The centre of their power was Kalinganagara (present Mukhalingam).

The Gangas rose into prominence in the 11th century. Anantavarman Chodaganga (1076-1148 A. D.) was one of the greatest rulers of ancient Orissa. During his long reign Orissa rose to a position of great power and prosperity. His inscriptions tell us that he exercised his sway over the vast region from the Ganges to the Godavari. The Senas of Bengal were friendly with him. When the Chola dynasty of South India became weak after the death of Kulottunga, Anantavarman established his power firmly in the Godavari region. Anantavarman was not only a success in war and administration. He was a patron of Hinduism as also of Sanskrit and Telegu literature.

The Muslim invasions of Orissa began during the reigns of Anantavarman's successors. Anangabhimha III and his son Narasimha I (1238-1264 A. D.) resisted the Muslim invasions Muslims valiantly and thus preserved Orissa's independence. The Ganga dynasty came to an end in 1435 and Kapilendra founded the Surya dynasty.

History of Kamārūpa : The northern area (Brahmaputra Valley) of Assam was known in ancient times as Kamārūpa. This region has been referred to as Pragjyotish in the Mahabharata. The dynasty which ruled in Tradition Kamarūpa from the 6th to the 7th century A. D. is stated to have been descended from the demon Narakasura mentioned in the Puranas. Tradition has it that after Narakasura, his son Bhagadatta and his successors ruled

for three thousand years, and then Pushyavarman became the ruler of Kamarupa. Perhaps the real implication of these traditions is that the rulers of Kamarupa were originally non-Aryans (*Anaryas*), who later on embraced the Brahmanical faith and culture.

It appears from the Nidhanpur inscription of Bhaskaravarman of Kamarupa that the first historical ruler of the dynasty was Pushyavarman. He was probably a contemporary of Samudra Gupta. The Allahabad Inscription of Samudra Gupta refers to Kamarupa as a tributary kingdom within the Gupta empire.

Taking advantage of the weakness of the Gupta empire, Kamarupa probably regained independence during the first half of the 6th century. At this time a King of Kamarupa performed two Asvamedha sacrifices. At the middle of the 6th century King Bhutivarman annexed the Nowgong and Sylhet regions. Under him Kamarupa became a powerful kingdom with its western frontier probably extending upto the Karatoya river in North Bengal.

After this, the rulers of Kamarupa came into conflict with the 'Later Guptas' of Magadha. During the reign of Bhaskaravarman Kamarupa occupied a very important place in the history of North India. After Sasanka, the King of Gauda, contrived the death of Rajyavardhan, the King of Thaneshwar, Bhaskaravarman entered into an alliance with Harshavardhan, who succeeded Rajyavardhan. After the death of Sasanka, he annexed parts of Bengal lying east of the river Bhagirathi. He issued a proclamation for land distribution from Karnasuvarna, the capital of Sasanka. The grand assembly of religions which Harsha summoned at Kanauj was attended by Bhaskaravarman. Hiuen Tsang visited Kamarupa at the invitation of Bhaskaravarman. Perhaps Kamarupa lost its independence as a result of an attack from the Tibetan King, Strong-tsan Gampo. Very little is known of the Kings of Kamarupa who ruled immediately after Bhaskaravarman.

Model Questions:

1. Give an estimate of Harshavardhan as a warrior, as a philanthropist and as a patron of learning.
2. Narrate briefly what you know about the account of Hiuen Tsang.
3. Write a short note on—the Nalanda monastery.
4. Who was Sasanka? What do you know about his reign and achievement?
5. Write a short note on—Kharavela.
6. Narrate the early history of Kamarupa.
7. Write briefly what you know about the ruling dynasties of ancient Orissa.

CHAPTER 10

South India

The Chalukyas : The fall of the Gupta empire was followed by the establishment of several independent kingdoms in South India. Among these, the kingdom of the Chalukyas is particularly worthy of note. The Chalukyas had their capital at Badami in the Bijapur district of Maharashtra. It was then known as Vatapi.

About the middle of the 6th century A. D. Pulakesin I founded the kingdom of the Chalukyas in the Kanarese-speaking region of South India. Kirtivarman I and Mangalesa extended by force of arms the frontiers of the Chalukya dominions. Pulakesin II (609-642 A. D.) was the most powerful monarch of the Chalukya dynasty. He occupied South Gujarat, Malwa, Konkan, Mysore and other areas. His suzerainty was recognised by the Cholas, the Pandyas and the Pulakesin II
Keralas. He defeated the Pallava king Mahendravarman, and advanced upto Kanchi, the Pallava capital. Harshavardhan, the undisputed ruler of the whole of North India, failed in his attempt to extend his empire beyond the Narmada in the Deccan when he was successfully resisted by Pulakesin II. This is ample testimony to the prowess of

this famous Chalukya King. Pulakesin II established diplomatic relations with the King of Persia. A fresco in the Ajanta caves depicts him welcoming a Persian envoy. The famous Chinese traveller, Hiuen Tsang, visited the Chalukya capital at Vatapi and was impressed by the power and wealth of Pulakesin

II. But Pulakesin II came to a tragic end. He was defeated and killed by the Pallava King Narasimhavarman in 642 A.D. His capital at Vatapi was destroyed by the victorious Pallava army. As a result the Chalukya power declined temporarily and the Pallavas rose to prominence in the Deccan.

Sometime after this, Vikramaditya I, son of Pulakesin II, recovered his father's kingdom. The Chalukya-Pallava feud began afresh. The Chalukya army raided the Pallava capital and plundered it. The Cholas, the Pandyas and the Keralas again began to feel the power of the Chalukyas. Vinayaditya I of Vatapi defeated a 'Later Gupta' King of North India. Vikramaditya II devastated the Pallava capital and drove away the invaders of south Gujarat. But the long struggle between the Chalukyas and the Pallavas led to an eventual decline in the power of both the dynasties by the end of the 8th century. The Chalukya sovereignty came to an end when Kirtivarman II, the Chalukya King, was defeated by the Rashtrakuta chief, Dantidurga. The Rashtrakutas then dominated the South.

The Chalukyas were of Brahmanical faith. Buddhism, though declining, had not yet vanished. Hiuen Tsang saw more than a hundred Buddhist monasteries in Chalukya art the Chalukya realm. The Chalukyas extended their patronage to Jainism. It was under them that the art of carving cave-temples out of rocks came into vogue. Some of the frescoes of Ajanta may well have been Chalukya contributions.

The Rashtrakutas : Towards the middle of the 8th century Dantidurga founded the Rashtrakuta dynasty. It is not known where his capital was. Amoghavarsha I made Manyakheta (Malkhed in Andhra Pradesh) his capital. The destruction of

the Chalukya power laid the foundation of the Rashtrakuta power.

Dantidurga wrested Mrharashtra from the last Chalukya King. He came into conflict with the Kings of Kanchi, Kalinga, South Kosala (in Madhya Pradesh), Malwa, Lata (South Gujarat) and other territories. His successor, Krishna I, subdued Konkan and defeated the rulers of Mysore and Vengi. He assumed imperial titles. The main artistic achievement of his reign is the huge temple of Siva carved out of rocks at Ellora. Dhruva (779-793) annexed the territory of the Gangas and defeated the Pallavas. He then turned to North India and clashed with the Gurjara-Pratiharas and the Palas.

The most eminent of the Rashtrakuta rulers was Govinda III (794-815 A. D.). He defeated the Pallava King, Dantivarman, and established his sway over a large part of the Deccan. In order to extend his dominions to North India he fought against the Gurjara-Pratihara King Nagabhata and emerged victorious. The ruler of Gauda-Magadha, Dharinapala, also bowed before the might of Govinda III. No other King of the South prior to Govinda III had been able to extend his influence so far north. He had good relations with the Arab rulers of Sind.

Amoghavarsha I, son of Govinda III, was more concerned with religion and literature than military ventures.

He did not continue the policy of making the Rashtrakutas predominant in Northern India. That is why during his reign the Rashtrakutas did not take any part in the conflict between the Gurjara-Pratiharas and the Palas. A contemporary

Arab writer has stated that the Rashtrakuta ruler was among the four foremost rulers of the world, the other three being the Chinese emperor, the Caliph of Baghdad and the Sultan of Constantinople. This is an eloquent testimony to the Rashtrakutas' power and influence. They maintained friendly relations with the Arabs of Sind and encouraged their subjects to trade with the Arab merchants. Perhaps the Rashtrakutas cultivated the

Conquests of
Govinda III

Arab testimony

Arabs because of their common enmity to the Gurjara-Pratiharas.

Indra III was among the more powerful of the later Rashtrakuta Kings. He plundered Kanauj some time between 915-917 A. D. and defeated the Gurjara-Pratihara ruler Mahipala. The last great Rashtrakuta ruler, Krishna III, won victories over the Gurjara-Pratihara and Chola Kings. His successors' weakness led to the fall of the Rashtrakuta dynasty in the last part of the 10th century.

The Pallavas : The history of the dynasties ruling over the northern regions of South India has been described above. In the Far South two dynasties came into prominence—the Pallavas and the Cholas.

The Pallavas had been ruling in the south for a long time. They also enjoyed for some time a dominating position in that region after their victory in the conflict with the Chalukyas. Their capital was Kanchi. This city became the main centre of Sanskrit studies in South India.

After the fall of the Satavahanas—perhaps in the 3rd century A. D.—the Pallavas established their kingdom on the eastern coast of the 'Far South'. There are different traditions about the origin of this dynasty. The first well-known king of the dynasty, Sivaskandavarman, ruled over a wide dominion and performed the Asvamedha sacrifice. The Pallava King, Vishnugopa, was defeated by Samudra Gupta. In the 6th century the Pallava King, Simhavishnu, extended his dominions upon the banks of the Kaveri after defeating the rulers of the neighbouring kingdoms. His son, Mahendravarman, was defeated by Pulakesin II, the Chalukya king. Narasimhavarman, son of Mahendravarman, avenged the defeat of his father by defeating Pulakesin II and occupying his capital Vatapi. He also sent an army to Ceylon and placed a nominee of his on the throne of that island. During his reign Hiuen Tsang visited the Pallava realm. In the 8th century the Pallava power declined as a result of the repeated attacks of the Chalukyas and quarrels among themselves. The Pallavas were in continuous conflict with the

Cholas, Pandiyas, Gangas and Rashtrakutas. The Pallava King, Dantivarman, was defeated by the Rashtrakuta King Govinda III. At last, towards the end of the 9th century the Chola King, Aditya I annexed the Pallava territory after defeating the Pallava King, Aparajitavarman.

Under the patronage of the Pallavas architecture and sculpture in South India rose to heights never reached before. The art of carving temples out of rock came into vogue during the reign of Mahendravarman. The huge temple of Mamallapuram was constructed at the time of Narasimhavarman. The images carved on the temple-faces were unique examples of Art sculpture. The so-called "Seven Pagodas" were also built at Narasimhavarman's behest.

The beautiful temples at Kanchi and various other places are testimonials to the love of art and religion of the Pallava Kings.

Kanchi, the Pallava capital, was one of the principal centres of the Brahmanical faith and Sanskrit studies. The Pallava

Kings were patrons of the Sanskrit language. Religion and Literature Bharavi, the well-known poet and author of

Kiratarjuniyam, graced the court of Simhavishnu. Dandi, the great author of a standard work on poetics, probably lived at the end of the 7th century. Mahendravarman I was himself a writer of some calibre.

The Cholas : The Chola kingdom was the most powerful of the four small independent kingdoms in the 'Far South' at the time of Asoka. Ceylon became a part of Chola dominions in the 2nd century A. D.

In the 9th century the Cholas began to come more and more into prominence with the decline of the Pallavas. Vijayalaya (846-871 A. D.), the Chola ruler, was a tributary king under the Pallavas. He annexed Tanjore which then became the capital of the Cholas. His son, Aditya I (871-907 A. D.), defeated the Pallava King. Under him the Chola empire extended from Madras city in the north to the banks of the Kaveri river in the south. During the reign of Parantaka I (907-953 A. D.) the Pandya Kingdom was annexed and the Pallava Kingdom destroyed. But Parantaka I was not successful in his attack on

Ceylon. His rule extended as far as Nellore in the north. This extension of Chola power alarmed the Rashtrakutas whose King, Krishna III, assisted by the Ganga ruler, launched an attack on the Cholas, resulting in the occupation of Kanchi and Tanjore. Parantaka's eldest son, Rajaditya, was killed during this campaign.

Rajaraja I (985-1016 A. D.) once more placed the Cholas on the pedestal of glory. He annexed Kerala, Pandya, the northern part of Ceylon and parts of Mysore. His powerful navy raided Conquests and occupied many islands in the Indian Ocean. He forced the ruler of Vengi to recognise his overlordship and possibly invaded Kalinga. The present State of Madras, parts of Andhra Pradesh and Mysore, the northern part of Tamil Nadu, and "the old islands of the sea numbering 1200" were included in his dominions.

It was Rajendra Chola I (1016-1044 A. D.), son of Rajaraja I, who put the Cholas at the pinnacle of their glory. He destroyed the power of the Gangas of Mysore, brought Pandya and Kerala under his complete control and annexed the whole of Ceylon. His ambition was not limited to South India. Like the Rashtrakutas, he also extended his long arm to North India. His victorious army attacked Orissa, south Kosala (in Madhya Pradesh) and Bengal and defeated several kings, including possibly Mahipala, the Pala King. Though this great campaign confirmed his reputation as a great wielder of arms, it did not lead to his annexation of any part of North India. He assumed the title of *Gangoikonda* to celebrate his victories in the Gangetic delta and founded a new capital called Gangoikonda-Cholapuram. His powerful navy crossed the Bay of Bengal and conquered the Andaman and Nicobar islands, the province of Pegu in Burma and parts of Sumatra and Malaya. No other king of India was able to extend his sway so far over the seas.

Rajadhiraja I, son of Rajendra Chola, achieved renown for his prowess and performed the Asvamedha sacrifice. But he was defeated and killed in 1052 A. D. in his conflict with the Western Chalukya king, Somesvara I. Vira Rajendra (1064-1070 A. D.) recovered the Chola glory partially. Rajendra II or Kulottunga I

(1072-1122 A. D.) occupied the throne of the Cholas as also that of the Eastern Chalukyas. In spite of his many victories he could not preserve the Chola power in Mysore. The territories which were conquered by the powerful navy of Rajendra Chola did not also probably recognise his overlordship. Rajendra II earned renown by his administrative reforms. He caused all land in his kingdom to be surveyed and then fixed the rent.

After the death of Rajendra II his kingdom became weak as a result of the repeated attacks of the Pandyas. At the beginning of the 14th century, Malik Kafur, the general of Sultan Ala-ud-din of Delhi, extended Muslim occupation upto Cape Comorin.

Chola administration : The Cholas had an excellent administrative system. The kingdom was divided into a number of provinces, some of which were in charge of princes of the royal blood. Some other provinces again were ruled by tributary kings who paid tribute in peacetime and supplied soldiers during war. For the convenience of administration the provinces were subdivided into units under different names (*Kottam*, *Nadu* etc.). The lowest unit of administration was the village (*Kurram*). The Chola kingdom had popular assemblies at various levels. Province, city, village—each stage had its own assembly. These assemblies had great responsibilities as well as powers with regard to local administration. Under the Cholas the villages enjoyed quite a large measure of autonomy in administrative matters. Every village had an assembly where people discussed local matters. In the villages where the Brahmins resided the assembly was known as the *Sabha* or *Mahasabha*. The members of the assembly were elected for a year. Usually the assembly met in the local temple. The assembly collected taxes, disposed of petty criminal cases and arranged for primary education. The royal officials exercised supervision and control over the assemblies. Modern historians have quite a lot of praise for the Chola system of local administration.

The cultivated lands were carefully surveyed before fixing royal dues, which normally amounted to one-sixth of the produce. The royal dues could be met either in cash or in kind or in both.

Chola art : In architectural and artistic style the huge temples of South India differ appreciably from their northern counterparts. The temples of South India have large compounds on all four sides, surrounded by high walls. Each of the four sides has one or more gateways (*gopuram*) which bear the carved images of many gods and goddesses. The vastness of temples and their fine artistic ornamentation amaze the visitors.

In the field of art the greatest achievement of the Cholas are the huge temples of Tanjore and Gangoikonda-Cholapuram. The Rajarajeswara temple of Tanjore built by Rajaraja is a unique artistic work. This is dedicated to Siva. It rises to a height of 190 ft. and has fourteen stories. No other temple of India reaches such a height. The summit of the temple is made of a single piece of huge boulder.

The Pandyas : The history of the Pandya kingdom of the 'Far South' goes back to a remote past. Megasthenes refers to it. The capital was Madura. The Pandya kingdom was an independent state at the time of Asoka. It did not form part of the Maurya domains. A Pandya king sent an envoy to the court of the Roman emperor Augustus in the 1st century B. C.

The Pandyas began to attain prominence at the end of the 6th or the beginning of the 7th century A. D. In the 9th century Sri-Mara Sri-Vallabha, the Pandya King, defeated the Gangas and the Pallavas and also the King of Ceylon. But later on Parantaka I, the Chola King, occupied the Pandya territory ; the Pandya King fled and took shelter in Ceylon.

The Pandya territory formed part of the Chola dominions for nearly three centuries. At last, in the first half of the 13th century, Jatavarman Kulasekhara revived the Pandya power. Maravarman Sundara Pandya I devastated the Chola kingdom. During the reign of Jatavarman Sundara Pandya (1251-1272 A. D.) the Pandya power reached the peak of its glory. He occupied Kanchi, the Chola capital, and defeated the Pallava, Hoysala and Kakatiya kings. He also subdued Ceylon. The famous Italian traveller, Marco Polo, visited the Pandya kingdom towards the close of the 13th century. The Pandyas fell

when Malik Kafur, Ala-ud-din's general, taking advantage of a struggle for succession among the Pandyas, invaded their kingdom.

Model Questions :

1. Narrate briefly the history of the Chalukyas.
2. Give a brief account of the Rashtrakuta dynasty.
3. Sketch the history of the Pallavas.
4. Narrate briefly the history of the Cholas, with special reference to their administration.

CHAPTER 11

The Palas and the Senas of Bengal

Origin of the Palas : The death of Sasanka was followed by loss of political unity and peace in Bengal. For nearly a century (650-760 A. D. approximately) the people languished in a state of anarchy (*Matsyanyaya*). Towards the middle of the 8th century the people elected a ruler named Gopala who brought peace to the state. We know very little about his family background, the extent of his territory and his political achievements. The copper inscription of Khalimpur states that his grandfather Dayitavishnu was "*Sarbavidyavishuddha*" and Gopala that his father Bapyata achieved eternal renown by defeating his enemies. This would seem to indicate that Gopala did not come of any royal family. The Monghyr inscription of Devapala credits Gopala with the conquest of all the world. Whatever the actual extent of Gopala's kingdom might have been, he established the Palas on a firm footing and made it possible for his son Dharmapala to launch his campaign of conquest of North India.

Dharmapala : Dharmapala (770-810 A. D.), son of Gopala, established firmly the Pala power in extensive regions of North India. He conquered Kanauj and made one of his dependents, named Chakrayudha, its ruler.

But Dharmapala was not successful in his struggle with

the Gurjara-Pratiharas and the Rashtrakutas. He was probably defeated by Vatsaraja, the Gurjara-Pratihara King. After this, Nagabhata II of the Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty drove out Chakrayudha, occupied Kanauj and defeated Dharmapala in an encounter near Monghyr. Afterwards Govinda II of the Rashtrakuta dynasty invaded Uttarapatha and defeated Nagabhata II. Dharmapala was forced to recognise his overlordship. However, these reverses did no permanent damage to the Pala power.

Dharmapala inherited from his father Gopala only a small kingdom. This he transformed into a large empire extending over a large part of North India through force of arms and skill in power-politics. Bengal, which had been in a state of disintegration and decay as a result of anarchy and invasion from outside, was made the dominating power in North India through the prowess and political insight of Dharmapala. For this reason he has a lasting place in the history of Bengal.

Dharmapala summoned an assembly at Kanauj. The princes of North India (the rulers of Bhoja, Matsya, Madra, Kuru, Yadu, Yavana, Avanti, Gandhara and Kira) attended the assembly and paid fealty to him. His suzerainty extended to the Punjab, eastern Rajputana, Malwa and Berar. In his campaign of victory he advanced up to Kedarnath in the Himalayas. His North Indian empire was divided into three parts. In the middle, the Kanauj area was ruled by a dependent king. The Punjab, Rajputana, Malwa, Berar and probably Nepal were governed by tributary rulers.

Devapala : After the death of Dharmapala his son Devapala (810-850 A.D.) ascended the Pala throne. In his reign extending for forty years he achieved greatness by adding to the Pala dominions with the might of his arms. In the east the King (probably Pralambha or Harjara) of Pragjyotisha or Assam recognised his suzerainty. In the south, he annexed Utkala or Orissa. In the north-west, Devapala marched against the Hun Kingdom and Kamboja with a view to making the frontiers of his empire secure. He defeated

Conflict with
Gurjara-
Pratiharas and
Rashtrakutas

Domination over
North India

Digvijaya

Mihira Bhoja of the Gurjara-Pratihara dynasty and a King of the South who was either Amoghavarsha I of the Rashtrakuta dynasty or Sri-Mara Sri-Ballabha of the Pandya dynasty. The story related in a copper inscription of the conquests of Devapala from the Himalayas to the Vindhya and from the Bay of Bengal to the Arabian Sea is not entirely an exercise in poetic imagination. There is no doubt that his predominance extended over the whole of North India from Assam to the frontiers of Kashmir. But his victorious army seems to have advanced not only upto the Vindhya, but even further south. His reputation spread beyond the borders of India. The ruler of Suvarnadwipa or Sumatra, Balaputradeva, set up a Buddhist monastery at Nalanda at the time of Devapala. Monghyr was probably one of his capitals. An Arab traveller has stated that Devapala's army was more powerful than that of the Gurjara-Pratihara and the Rashtrakuta Kings. It had 55,000 elephants. Devapala's troops were so numerous that 15,000 men were attached to the army for washing their clothes.

Downfall of the Palas : The Palas began to decline after the death of Devapala. Narayanapala (854-908 A. D.) was defeated by the Rashtrakuta King, Amoghavarsha I, and the Gurjara-Pratihara Kings, Bhoja and Mahendrapala. Magadha and North Bengal became for some time parts of the Gurjara-Pratihara domains. Pragjyotish and Orissa declared independence. After the decline of the Gurjara-Pratiharas, the Pala dominions were repeatedly attacked by the Chandellas of Kalanjar and the Kalachuris of Madhya Bharat. The Pala dominions were divided into two under two branches of the dynasty as a result of internal struggles. Some independent principalities came into being in eastern and southern Bengal. Of these, one was the Kingdom of Harikela.

Mahipala I (988-1038 A. D.) was a more powerful ruler than his immediate predecessors. He probably extended his sway upto Varanasi in the west, but could not establish his authority over the whole of Bengal. The Chandras, the Kambojas and the Suras ruled over different parts of Bengal at that time.

In 1021-1023 A. D. a general of the powerful King of the South, Rajendra Chola I, invaded Bengal. However, this did not lead to inclusion of any part of Bengal within the Chola dominions, nor did it result in Mahipala I's loss of authority over his possessions. The Kalachuri King Gangeya defeated Mahipala. The struggle between the Palas and the Kalachuris continued for a long time. A daughter of the Kalachuri King Karna was married to Vigrhapala III (1055-1070 A. D.). In the middle of the 11th century Bengal was invaded by Mahasivagupta Yayati, the Somavamsi ruler of Orissa. The Palas became weak as a result of invasions from the west and the south. They lost their hold over east, west and south Bengal. Magadha remained a Pala possession only in name.

In the reign of Mahipala II (1070-1075 A. D.) Divya, a high official of the Kaivarta caste, led a revolt, ousted and killed the king and established his rule over North Bengal. He was succeeded by his brother, Rudraka, whose successor was Bhima. Ramapala, the younger brother of Mahipala II, defeated Bhima and recovered North Bengal. This political revolution forms the subject-matter of the well-known historical *kavya*, *Ramacharitam* by Sandhyakar Nandi. Ramapala was an able ruler who attended to the well-being of his subjects. His overlordship was recognised by the Varman king of East Bengal. Assam was again brought back to the fold of the Pala domains. Ramapala succeeded partially in his invasion of Orissa. He fought the Mahadavala King Govindachandra of Varanasi.

After the death of Ramapala, his weak successors failed to keep the Pala dominions intact. In the 12th century the Senas replaced the Palas in Bengal. The Pala occupation remained confined to Bihar for some time; they lost even this last foothold when Bakhtiyar Khalji put an end to their rule.

Civilization of Bengal under the Palas : The period of Pala rule is a glorious chapter in the history of Bengal. This age saw the establishment of Bengal's predominance in North

India. Under the Palas the civilization and culture of Bengal reached unprecedented heights.

The Palas were Buddhist by faith and naturally favoured Buddhism. Under their patronage eastern India remained the stronghold of Buddhism for nearly four centuries. Probably during the reign of Gopala a Buddhist monastery was set up at Odantapuri in Bihar; the first Buddhist monastery in Tibet was built on its model. Another view credits Dharmapala with the establishment of the monastery at Odantapuri. Whatever be the truth, there is no doubt that Dharmapala set up the famous *Vihara* of Vikramasila. It was probably situated near Patharghat in the Bhagalpur district of Bihar. This *Vihara* was one of the principal centres of Buddhist studies. At Paharpur in the Rajshahi district of East Pakistan ruins have been found of another *Vihara* built by Dharmapala. It was known as the *Vihara* of Somapura.

The greatest Buddhist scholar during the reign of the Palas, Dipankar Srijnan Atish, propagated Buddhism in Tibet. The Tibetans still honour the memory of this great Bengali religious leader and savant. Though the Palas patronized Buddhism, they were not intolerant of other faiths. Under them there was no eclipse of Hinduism. The Mahayana form of Buddhism was prevalent in Bengal and Bihar at the time of the Palas. However, the Mahayana creed was mixed up with Tantric beliefs and had assumed a new form. Gradually the Buddhists took more actively to Tantric rituals. The philosophical base of Buddhism was submerged under a flood of Sakti-worship.

The Pala age saw remarkable progress in architecture and sculpture. The famous *Vihara* of Paharpur was a Pala construction. The stone images found there attest to amazing progress in the art of sculpture. In this connection mention must be made of Dhiman and Bitopal, the two stalwarts of the world of art under the Palas.

The author of an Ayurvedic treatise, Chakrapani Datta, and the composer of *Ramacharitam*, the well-known poet Sandhyakar Nandi, are the more remarkable among the literary figures of the Pala age.



Goddess (Pala period)

The Senas : With the decline of the Palas in the first half of the 12th century the Senas established themselves in Bengal. The Senas were in origin Brahmins from Karnata (the Kanarese-speaking area in Mysore and Andhra Pradesh) in South India. After assuming rulership they became known as Kshatriyas. Some copper inscriptions refer to them as *Brahma-Kshatriyas*. The reasons

which prompted the founder of the dynasty to come from the distant south to Bengal are not known. The Palas used to appoint to high positions people hailing from different parts of India. Perhaps the Senas were the descendants of one such Pala official hailing from Karnata. They may also have been connected with those rulers in South India who launched invasions against the Palas.

The founder of the Sena dynasty, Samanta Sena, is said to have lived on the banks of the Ganges in West Bengal. But there is no evidence that he ruled over any kingdom or principality. His son, Hemanta Sena, may have set up a principality. Vijaya Sena (1095-1158 A. D.), son of Hemanta Sena, placed the Senas on a sure political footing. He annexed east and north Bengal and probably attacked Kamarupa, Mithila and

Accession of
strength

Kalinga. He was a powerful ruler and ensured peace within his dominions.

Vijaya Sena was succeeded by his son, Ballala Sena (1158-1179 A. D.). Though he has no military achievement to his credit, Ballala Sena occupies an unforgettable place in the social history of Bengal. He is said to have introduced *kulinism* (a system of determining social status) among Hindus of the upper castes. He is the author of two books of no small repute—*Danasagara* and *Adbhutasagara*. He sent Hindu missionaries to Nepal, Bhutan, Arakan etc. Under the Senas Buddhism declined and Hinduism flourished.

The last great independent ruler of Bengal was Lakshmana Sena (1179-1205 A. D.), son of Ballala Sena. Early in his life he achieved martial renown. Probably before he ascended the throne—during the reign of Ballala Sena—Lakshmana Sena led victorious campaigns in Gauda, Kamarupa and Kalinga. After his accession to the throne he marched upto Banaras and Allahabad and extended the Sena dominions in the west by defeating the Gahadavala King of Kanauj. Since the glorious achievements of Dharmapala and Devapala no other ruler of Bengal had been such a success in the field of battle as Lakshmana Sena.

Lakshmana Sena was a patron of learning and a lover of literature. Eminent literary figures like Jayadeva, the poet who wrote *Gita-Govinda*, Dhoyi, Sarapa, Govardhana, Sridhar Das, Umapati Dhar and great scholars like Halayudha graced his court. Lakshmana Sena himself was a poet of some repute. He completed *Adbhutasagara*, the unfinished work of his father. He was a worshipper of Vishnu. His capital was at Nadiya.

In his old age Lakshmana Sena suffered a terrible reversal of fortune. At the beginning of the 13th century, probably in 1202 A. D., Ikhtiyar-ud-din Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji, a Turkish adventurer who came to India in the wake of Muhammad of

Predominance
of Hinduism

Progress of
literature

Fall of the
Senas

Ghur, occupied Magadha and after attacking Nadiya captured it. Whether Lakshmana Sena took any military measures to prevent Muslim invasion of Bengal and Magadha is not known. Bakhtiyar destroyed the Buddhist monasteries of Patna and occupied entire Magadha. Then he led a march through the hills and jungles of Jharkhand and appeared suddenly before Nadiya. Lakshmana Sena was unable to resist such a surprise attack and fled to east Bengal. After the occupation of Nadiya Bakhtiyar annexed parts of north Bengal and set up his capital at Lakhnauti. There is no truth in the tradition that Bakhtiyar conquered Bengal with only eighteen Muslim horsemen. He had a large army with him when he suddenly fell on Nadiya. Moreover, he did not annex the whole of Bengal. Even after the fall of Nadiya the descendants of Lakshmana Sena ruled independently over east Bengal for many years.

Model Questions :

1. Narrate in brief the history of the Pala dyansty.
2. Write what you know about the achievements of Dharmapala and Devapala.
3. Sketch the history of the Sena dynasty.

CHAPTER 12

Indian Expansion Overseas

The geographical frontiers of India could never keep her isolated from the world outside. Ancient India had intimate relations with her neighbours. This connection was based on expansion of commerce, establishment of overseas colonies and cultural exchanges.

India and Central Asia : The archaeological discoveries of the great scholar, Sir Aurel Stein, in Central Asia include ruins of Buddhist stupas and monasteries, images of gods and goddesses of Buddhist and Brahmanical faiths and many manuscripts written in Indian languages and scripts. During

the Kushan period and later, the nomadic peoples of Central Asia embraced Buddhism. There is evidence to show that flourishing Indian colonies existed in the Khotan area.

India and the Far East: In the Far East Buddhism spread to China, Korea and Japan. In order to collect Buddhist religious literature and images of Buddhist divinities and also with a view to studying the tenets of Buddhism under Indian scholars, many Chinese scholars and lovers of this religion used to visit India both by land and by sea. In this connection mention must be made of Fa-hien and Hiuen Tsang. However, it was not a one-way traffic. Indian scholars also used to visit China in order to propagate Buddhism. There were diplomatic and commercial relations between India and China.

India and Burma: Even before the 1st century A. D. many Indian colonies were probably set up in the coastal as well as the interior regions of Burma. The Talaings of South Burma may seem not quite unlike the people of Telengana in South India. The rulers of the small principality of Pagan in Central Burma showed favour to many Buddhist and Vaishnava emigrants from India. In fact, the culture and civilization of Burma is really of Indian origin. The Burmese practise Buddhism. Their language has close connection with Pali and their script is a revised version of Indian script.

Burma had very close connection with Arakan on its east as regards religion, culture and commerce. Indian emigrants entered Arakan along with Buddhism.

India and Thailand: In the 13th century the Thai people from China established themselves in Thailand or Siam. Prior to this, the country was mainly inhabited by Indian emigrants for nearly a thousand years. By the time the Thais entered the scene, Indian religion, language and literature had so strongly been entrenched there that the newly arrived Thais could not escape imbibing a strong Indian influence. The Thai kings embraced Buddhism and used the Pali language.

India and Malaya: There were several Indian colonies

in Malaya in the early centuries of the Christian era. Even now ruins of Hindu and Buddhist shrines as also inscriptions written in Sanskrit are found there.

India and Java : Indian colonists began to settle in Java from the 1st century A. D. Two powerful Hindu kingdoms existed in West and Central Java for a long period. During the first half of the 16th century Java came under Muslim occupation.

India and Sumatra : The earliest Hindu kingdom in Sumatra, known as Sri-Vijaya, was established in the 4th century A. D. It became particularly powerful in the second half of the 7th century A. D. I-tsing, the famous Chinese traveller, has described this kingdom as one of the main centres of Buddhist studies. Another Hindu kingdom of Sumatra was known as Malayu. Marco Polo in his travel account refers to the prosperity enjoyed by this kingdom.

India and Borneo : Hindu colonies existed in Borneo in the fourth century A. D. The Brahmins formed a major section of the population in these colonies and their faith predominated.

India and Bali : In the East Indies a Hindu colony still survives in Bali. Islam has not been able to penetrate the island. Here Buddhism prevailed side by side with Hinduism. The reign of the last Hindu king of the island came to an end in 1911.

The Sailendra Empire : In the 8th century A. D. the small states of the East Indies were united under the powerful Sailendra dynasty. The Hindu kingdoms of Sumatra, Java and Malay Peninsula were included in the Sailendra empire. The original centre of power of the Sailendras was probably in Java or Malay Peninsula. Arab writers have referred to the Sailendra empire as *Zabay* or *Zabaj* (the empire of *Maharaja*) and given glowing accounts of its prosperous condition. It was the major naval power of Indonesia. This powerful empire began to decline in the 9th century. In the 11th century the Sailendras came into conflict with the Cholas of South India. The strong navy of Rajendra Chola established Chola

authority on the east coast of Sumatra and the middle and southern parts of Malay Peninsula. In the 13th century a ruler occupying the throne of the Sailendras clashed with the then Pandya king. The last Hindu ruler of this once powerful empire embraced Islam towards the close of the 15th century. The liberal patronage of the Sailendras led to spread of the Mahayana form of Buddhism. The colossal temple of Barabudur displays incomparable artistry. The Sailendras were on friendly terms with the Palas of Bengal. Towards the close of the 8th century a Bengali scholar named Kumaraghosha acted in the capacity of adviser to the Sailendra kings in religious matters. In the 9th century A. D. king Balaputradeva built a monastery at Nalanda. Its expenses were met from the revenues of five villages granted by Devapala.

General survey of Hindu colonies : It is not the sword which led to expansion of the religion, culture and civilization of India in the East Indies. The message of India reached this extensive region through peaceful colonisation by Indians. Both the Brahmanical and Buddhist faiths were prevalent in the Hindu colonies. In the religious life of Java, Buddha and Siva were closely associated. This significant feature is a clue to the relation between the Brahmanical faith and Buddhism.

The chief monument of the old literature of Java was the *Ramayana*. It is not a translation of Valmiki's epic, but an entirely new creation. A prose rendering of the *Mahabharata* was well-known in Java. There is no doubt that both these Indian epics were immensely popular and exercised a unique influence on the religious life and literature of Java.

In the Hindu colonies social life naturally developed on the Indian model. The caste system was very much in existence in Java and Sumatra. But there was no bar to inter-caste marriage, nor was untouchability known.

India and Annam : Modern Annam was included in the ancient Hindu kingdom of Champa which survived till the first half of the 19th century. The Hindu society of Champa developed on a rigid Indian model. The Brahmins were at

the top, though the Kshatriyas were not far below them. Sanskrit was the official language. A king of Champa, Indravarman, studied carefully the six systems of Hindu philosophy, Buddhist philosophy, Sanskrit grammar, etc. Among the gods and goddesses Siva dominated the scene. Buddhism did not make much headway in Champa.

India and Cambodia : Modern Cambodia and Cochin-China were known in ancient times as Kambuja. Its earliest Hindu kingdom was called Fu-nan. Here the Brahmanical and Buddhist faiths co-existed. Indian philosophy and Sanskrit language were studied. In the social sphere there was the caste system.

After the fall of Fu-nan a powerful kingdom named Kambuja came into being. Towards the close of the 9th century the political influence of Kambuja extended as far as Yunnan (in China), Malay Peninsula and Siam. In the second half of the 12th century Jayavarman VII, king of Kambuja, annexed Champa and South Burma. In the middle of the 19th century Kambuja was reduced to the status of a French Protectorate.

Though Buddhism received royal patronage now and then, it is Hinduism which predominated in Kambuja. The Sanskrit inscriptions of Kambuja are compositions in the *kavya* style. A large number of *Asramas* were set up as centres of Hindu religion and culture. In Kambuja the art of sculpture made amazing progress. The massive temple of Angkor Vat, dedicated to Vishnu, is an imperishable monument of the art of Kambuja.

India and Ceylon : The present inhabitants of Ceylon are mainly the descendants of Dravidian and Aryan colonists from India. Though the Sinhalese language shows some traces of Dravidian influence, it is more intimately related to the Aryan language. According to legends, prince Vijaysimha of Gujarat (or Magadha or Kalinga) captured the island of Ceylon from the *Yakshas* shortly before the demise of the Buddha. The missionaries sent by Asoka introduced Buddhism in Ceylon when *Devanampiya* Tissa ruled in the island. In later ages

Ceylon came to be occupied by several Chola kings. The Tamil-speaking colonists still constitute an important section of the population of Ceylon.

Model Question :

1. Give a brief account of Indian colonies in the East Indies.

CHAPTER 13

Muslim Invasions and the Rajput Dynasties

Islam originated in Arabia in the first half of the 7th century A.D. Muhammad, who founded the religion, was born in 570 A.D. and died in 632 A.D. At the age of forty a new truth was revealed to him and he began to propagate the doctrine of one God—Allah. He inspired the Arabs with a new sense of nationalism and, uniting diverse elements under the banner of a single religion, laid the foundation of the political power of the Arabs. Within a century of his death different countries of Asia and Africa as also Spain in Europe were conquered by the Prophet's followers. The religious head of the Muslims, the Caliph, became the ruler of this vast Arabian empire.

Arab conquest of Sind : Arab incursions in western India began as early as the first half of the 7th century, but the Arabs did not try to extend their empire to India before the 8th century.

At the beginning of the 8th century Sind was ruled by a Bhahmin King named Dahir. Some ships laden with presents for the Caliph from the king of Ceylon had been plundered by pirates on the coasts of Sind.

Muhammad bin Qasim

This was enough of an excuse to the Arab ruler of Iran, Hajjaj, who governed as the Caliph's representative, to promptly send an army against Dahir. The expedition failed and the Arab general was killed. A fresh expedition, far better

planned and organised, was then sent under the command of Muhammad bin Qasim. In 712 A.D. he captured the port of Debal (near the town of Thatta). Then he clashed directly with Dahir and won. Dahir gave up his life to preserve his country's independence, but he could not resist the powerful Arab hordes. Muhammad bin Qasim annexed Sind and Multan and laid the foundation of Muslim power in India (712 A.D.). This great conqueror later fell a victim to intrigues in the Caliph's court and died a cruel death.

The Arabs ruled in Sind for a long time, but could not penetrate deeper into India. They led repeated expeditions against the kings of Rajputana, Gujarat, Kathiawad and Cutch but could not succeed against the Rajputs, particularly against the Gurjara-Pratiharas. Under the Arabs, Sind became a part of the Muslim world and lost all contact with Hindu India.

India at the advent of the Muslims : Towards the latter part of the 10th century A.D. the Turkish Muslims of Ghazni in Afghanistan began raiding India. Their repeated attacks led to the establishment of Muslim authority in north-west India. There was no political unity in India at the time ; different parts of North and South India were under the rule of various Hindu dynasties. The Hindu rulers never quite appreciated the need for presenting a united front against invaders from outside. While the Hindu kings of North India fell victims to Muslim aggression one after another, the Hindu rulers of the south continued to be busy with their own petty interests and struggles. The result was that within a hundred years of establishment of Muslim rule in North India, the southern states also fell victim to Muslim occupation.

Origin of the Rajputs : The Hindu kingdoms which were set up in North India after the death of Harshavardhan were mostly ruled by Rajput dynasties. When the Muslims came a large part of North India was under the rule of the Rajputs. It is they who put up a gallant and long fight against the Muslims to preserve the country's freedom and save the Hindu religion. Some historians have

Political
disunity

Rajput period

called the period from Harshavardhan's death to the close of the 12th century the "Rajput period". This seems to be an apt description, as the importance of the Rajputs during this period of Indian history cannot be exaggerated.

Scholars fail to agree on the question of the origin of the Rajputs. Tradition has it that the Rajputs were the descendants of Kshatriyas belonging to the Aryan stock, the Solar and Lunar dynasties of ancient times. Some scholars have accepted this tradition as true, but it differs in many respects from the evidence available from inscriptions. From the point of view of history, inscriptions have more validity than traditions. The supporters of tradition hold that the deep reverence of the Rajputs for Hinduism and their long and heroic resistance to the Muslims to save this religion prove that they had their origin in India and were not of foreign extraction. But the Turks, converted to Islam, had shown more zeal to propagate the faith than the Arabs themselves. The Rajputs could have been equally zealous in favour of Hinduism even if they were of foreign extraction. Again, the physical characteristics of the Rajputs have similarities with those of the Aryans. It is, therefore, argued that the Rajputs were descendants of the Aryans. But many scholars do not attach much importance to similarities in physical characteristics. They hold that in a country which has seen a mixture of so many races, it is difficult, if not impossible, to conclude with any degree of certainty about the origin of a particular people merely from physical characteristics.

More than a hundred years ago Tod, the historian of the Rajputs, in his famous work *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, described the Rajputs as a people of Saka origin. That some Rajput clans are of foreign extraction has been proved beyond doubt by the evidence of inscriptions. Thus, the Gurjara-Pratiharas have been referred to in the inscriptions as "sprung from the Gurjara lineage". The Gurjaras entered India along with the Huns from Central Asia. The Rajput clans described by Tod include one called Hun. Successive races of foreign invaders such as

Traditional view

Modern view

Greeks, Kushans, Sakas, Huns and Gurjaras adopted the language, religion and social customs of the country and were in course of time absorbed into the Hindu society. The Hindu society of those times was liberal in outlook and far-sighted. Instead of expelling the foreigners, the Hindus accepted them within their society. It is not, therefore, impossible that the Rajputs may, after all, be of foreign extraction.

However, all Rajput clans were not of foreign extraction. Some Rajput clans were descendants of the aboriginal (*Anarya*) inhabitants of India. Thus, it is likely that the Chandellas, the famous Rajput dynasty of Madhya Bharat, were descendants of the primitive Gond people. Some scholars think that those Rajput clans which worshipped the sun were of foreign extraction while the worshippers of the serpent (*Naga*) were descendants of the aborigines of this country.

Gurjara-Pratihara empire : Among the Rajput dynasties the Gurjara-Pratiharas are particularly remarkable for their achievement. At first they established their sway over Rajputana, Malwa and Gujarat. Afterwards they extended their empire to a large part of North India. With the Arab occupation of Sind the Gurjara-Pratiharas repeatedly clashed with the Muslims in Western India. This Rajput dynasty played a memorable role in defending the country against foreign invaders.

In the second half of the eighth century A. D. Nagabhata and Vatsaraja extended the boundaries of the Gurjara-Pratihara empire and made it the suzerain power of North India. The Gurjara-Pratiharas struggled with the Palas of Bengal and the Rashtrakutas of the Deccan for a long time. Kanauj was at that time considered to be the seat of sovereignty in North India. Some historians are of opinion that behind the Gurjara-Pratihara-Rashtrakuta-Pala clashes lay primarily the desire for occupation of Kanauj, the historic symbol of imperial authority.

Mihir Bhoja was the most powerful of the Gurjara-Pratiharas. In his long reign extending for half a century he made himself the suzerain of North India by force of arms. The Palas of

Bengal had declined after the death of Devapala. The Rashtrakutas also were in a state of eclipse as a result of attacks from the neighbouring Chalukyas. Taking this opportunity Bhoja brought Malwa and Saurashtra under his authority by defeating the Rashtrakutas. He also inflicted defeat on the weak Pala King. Punjab, Ayodhya and other places came under his authority and he established his capital at Kanauj. He probably ruled for the period from 836 A.D. to 885 A.D. Bhoja assumed the title "*Adi Varaha*" (the Primeval Boar, i.e. the Boar incarnation of Vishnu).

Mahendrapala, son of Bhoja, not only preserved the empire left to him by his father, but added to it by annexing Magadha and parts of North Bengal from the weakened Palas. His court was graced by the famous poet Rajasekhara.

In the first half of the 10th century A. D. Indra III, the Rashtrakuta King, defeated Mahipala, the Gurjara-Pratihara King, and temporarily occupied Kanauj. After this the Gurjara-Pratiharas gradually declined. In the first half of the 11th century Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni put to fight Rajyapala, the last king of the dynasty, and plundered Kanauj.

The Gurjara-Pratiharas have three achievements to their credit. First, they resisted the Muslim invasion of western India for a long period. The Muslim writers of those times have praised their military power. Secondly, this dynasty kept a large part of North India united for a long time. The empire of the Gurjara-Pratharas was greater in extent and more lasting than that of Harshavardhan. Finally, the Gurjara-Pratiharas were patrons of Hinduism and Sanskrit literature.

Rajput dynasties : In the 10th century A. D. North India lost its political unity due to the decline of the Gurjara-Pratiharas and a number of independent dynasties came to rule over different parts of it. Most of these dynasties were Rajput in origin.

In the western end of India, in Gujarat and Kathiawad, the Rajput Chaulukya or Solanki dynasty ruled for nearly three and a half centuries. Their capital was Anahila-Pataka

Greeks, Kushans, Sakas, Huns and Gurjaras adopted the language, religion and social customs of the country and were in course of time absorbed into the Hindu society. The Hindu society of those times was liberal in outlook and far-sighted. Instead of expelling the foreigners, the Hindus accepted them within their society. It is not, therefore, impossible that the Rajputs may, after all, be of foreign extraction.

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In the Ajmer region of Rajputana the Chahamanas or Chauhanas ruled from the 9th to the 12th century A. D. Sakambhari or Sambhar was their ancient seat of power. Later on the centre of their power gradually shifted to Ajmer and Delhi. After their occupation of Delhi, it became their responsibility to guard the entrance to the Ganges-Jumna valley against Muslim invaders. The defeat and death of Prithviraja III (1192 A.D.) in the battle of Tarain against Muhammad of Ghur marked their failure to act as India's door-keepers.

The Paramaras ruled in Malwa in Madhya Bharat from the 10th to the 13th century A. D. The greatest ruler of this dynasty, Bhoja (1010-1055 A. D.), is well-known in the history and legend of this country.

In the Jeja-Bhukti or Jejaka-Bhukti (Bundelkhand, U. P.) region the Chandella or Chandratreya dynasty ruled for a long period from the 10th century A. D. Their original seat of power was Khajuraho. Later on the centre of their political power shifted to Kalanjar, Ajaygarh and Mahoba.

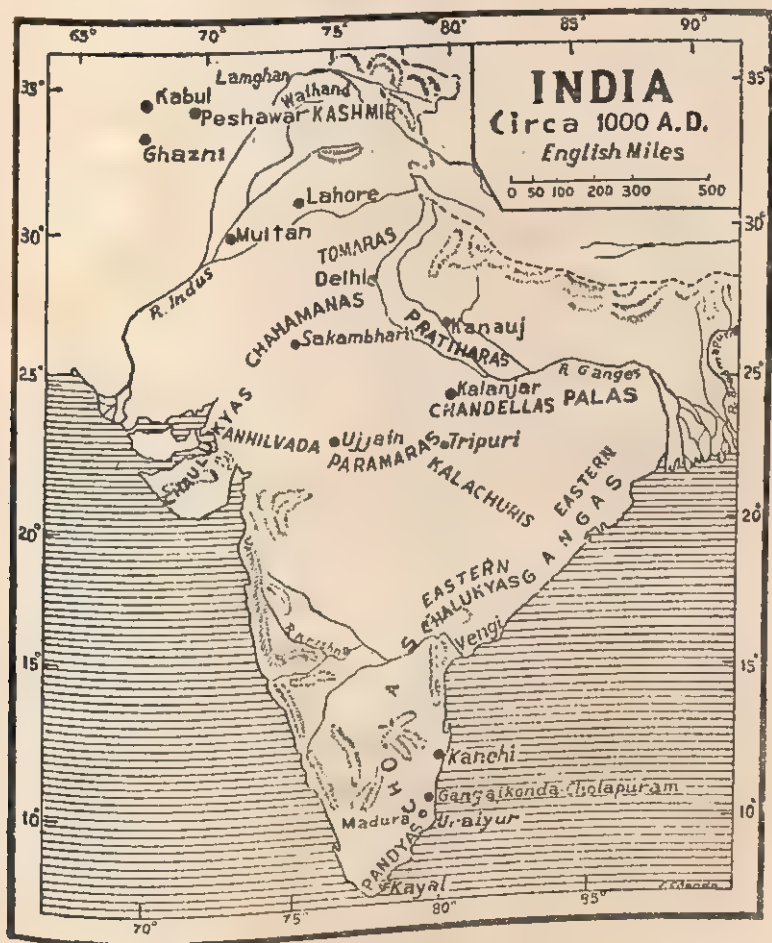
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They played an important role in the history of North India. "The mantle of imperialism which had fallen from the shoulders of the Gurjara-Pratiharas upon the Chandellas and the Paramaras was at last seized by the Kalachuris."

The Gahadavala dynasty ruled over the extensive region from Banaras to Kanauj. Banaras was their chief centre of power. Kanauj was included in their kingdom. King Jayachandra (1170-1193 A. D.) was a rival of the Chauhan king Prithviraja III. In 1193 he was defeated and killed by Muhammad of Ghur at the battle of Chandwar.

Turkish rulers of Ghazni : It has already been mentioned that the Arabs could not establish their rule over any part of India other than Sind. The establishment of Muslim rule in India goes to the credit of the Turks.

In the 10th century A. D. the Caliphs lost much of their political authority and a number of independent kingdoms sprang up within their far-flung empire. In 963 A. D. Alptigin



founded a small Turkish principality centering round the city of Ghazni in southern Afghanistan. In 977 his slave and son-in-law, Sabuktigin, occupied the throne of Ghazni.

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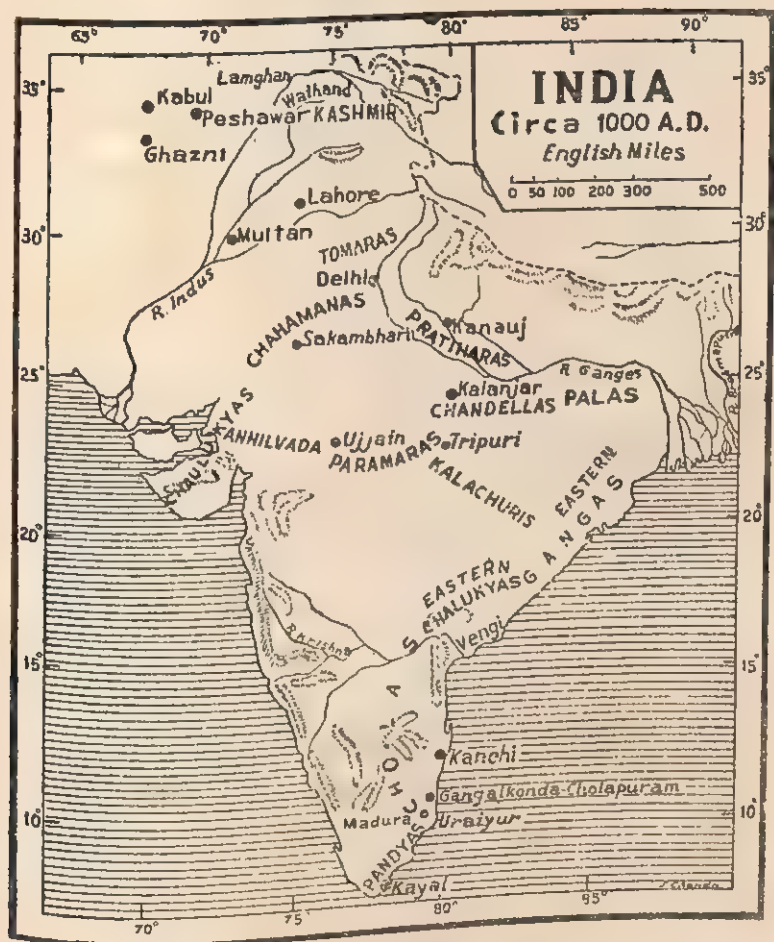
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India. At this time north-west India was under the rule of the Hindu Shahi dynasty. The authority of the Shahi king Jaipal (965-1002 A. D.) extended from Lamghan to the river Chenab.

There was a clash between him and Sabuktigin. On his way to Ghazni Jaipal's army was destroyed by a severe storm. He was forced to

promise to hand over to Sabuktigin 50 elephants and large sums of money. He also agreed to cede some forts and towns on the frontier. But he refused to abide by these humiliating terms after his return to his kingdom. Then, assisted by several kings of North India, he again marched towards Ghazni at the head of a vast army. But again he was defeated. This time Sabuktigin occupied the extensive region from Lamghan to Peshawar. In this way Islam penetrated into the north-west of India in the form of Turkish occupation.

Sultan Mahmud : After the death of Sabuktigin his son Sultan Mahmud became the ruler of Ghazni in 998 A. D. He was recognised as an independent ruler by the Caliph of Baghdad. After reigning for a period of 32 years he died in 1030 A. D. In Indian history Mahmud is chiefly known as a plunderer. According to tradition, he raided India 17 times and plundered many prosperous cities and holy places of North India. A review of his invasions in India shows that he was not eager to establish any permanent empire in this country. He only brought the Punjab and Multan under his rule; he did not try to bring any other part of India within his dominions. Mahmud only wanted to plunder India's wealth. At that time the Chandellas, the Chaulukyas and other ruling dynasties of North India had not yet lost their might. It may be that Mahmud did not consider it an easy job to oust these dynasties. However, Mahmud's repeated invasions did make the rulers of North India weaker and thus made it possible for Muhammad of Ghur to establish his empire in North India a century and a half later.

In 1001 A. D. Mahmud invaded the Shahi kingdom of north-west India and ravaged some districts. The defeated

Shahi ruler, Jaipal, was taken prisoner along with his sons and grandsons and was granted freedom only after payment of a huge ransom. Jaipal could not stand this humiliation and sacrificed his life by jumping into fire. He was succeeded by his son Anandapal. Mahmud inflicted a defeat on him in 1006 A. D. and he was compelled to take shelter in the mountains of Kashmir. After some time Anandapal collected a large army with the assistance of some Hindu rulers of North India. In 1009 Mahmud defeated the army of Anandapal near Waihand. Anandapal fled towards the fort of Nagarkot in the Kangra valley. Mahmud pursued him and captured the fort. Immense riches fell into his hands and possibly the wide region from the Indus to Nagarkot came under his authority. Anandapal did not accept his defeat as final even then. He established himself in the Salt Range region and began fresh preparations for fighting Mahmud.

After the death of Anandapal in 1014 A. D. his son Trilochanpal, aided by king Sangramraj of Kashmir, fought for some time against Mahmud. Though Mahmud won he did not try to enter the more or less inaccessible mountain areas of Kashmir. Trilochanpal now established himself in the Siwalik Hills and tried to increase his strength with the help of the Chandella king, Vidyadhar. But again he was compelled to accept defeat at the hands of Mahmud on the bank of the river Ramganga.

After the death of Trilochanpal (1022 A. D.) his son Bhimpal continued the struggle against the Muslims. On his death in 1026 A. D. the Shahi dynasty came to an end. Their kingdom had already been captured by Mahmud. Jaipal and his successors occupy a place of pride in the history of India on account of their long and heroic resistance to the Muslims in defence of the country's freedom.

In 1009 A. D. Mahmud captured the famous fort of Bhatinda. It guarded the entrance to the rich Gangetic valley from the

north-west. The province of Multan in the north of Sind was ruled by a Muslim chief, Daud. In 1006 Mahmud occupied Multan. In 1009 he captured the famous centre of commerce, Narayanpur, in Alwar (Rajasthan) This led to expansion of trade between India and Khurasan,

In 1014 A. D. Mahmud plundered the famous holy place of the Hindus, Thaneshwar. A similar fate overtook Mathura and Kanauj in 1018. Mahmud destroyed many temples of Mathura and collected an immense booty. The last Gurjara-Pratihara king of Kanauj, Rajyapala, fled on hearing the news of Mahmud's advance. Mahmud twice (1015, 1021 A. D.) led his army against Kashmir, but could not achieve any success in the face of its mountain barriers. Mahmud also came into conflict with a Chandella king—either Ganda or Vidyadhar,—twice (1019, 1022 A. D.) and plundered Kalanjar. In 1026 Mahmud plundered the famous temple of Somnath in Gujarat. Bhima I, the Chalukya king of Gujarat, failed to stop the advancing hordes of Mahmud. The temple of Somnath yielded Mahmud nearly twenty million gold coins apart from precious jewels.

Mahmud ruled over an empire extending from Iraq and the Caspian Sea to the Ganges and from the Aral Sea to the deserts of Rajputana. Its extent was about 2000 miles from east to west and about 1400 miles from north to south. In order to found and preserve this empire Mahmud had repeatedly to engage in campaigns in Iran and Central Asia. So it is not India alone which experienced the might of his sword.

Many prosperous cities and regions of India were reduced to dust by Mahmud's army. This was the nature of conquest in those days. We shall, therefore, be mistaken if we regard Mahmud as a blood-thirsty barbarian. He showed unique skill as a general. It is doubtful if there was in Asia at that time any one else who could equal him in generalship. He was an able administrator and a just ruler. Peace and order prevailed all over his vast empire. He paid particular attention

Mahmud's
empire

Mahmud's
character and
achievements

to the welfare of his subjects. Though a believer in Islam, Mahmud did not oppress his Hindu subjects. Though he destroyed temples in enemy territories, his own Hindu subjects could practise their religion without any fear. Separate quarters were assigned to the Hindus at Ghazni. Mahmud was a patron of art and constructed many palatial buildings and mosques at Ghazni. He also founded a University at Ghazni. The famous scholar, Al-Biruni, and Firdawsi, the author of the Persian epic *Shahnamah*, belonged to his court. The *Shahnamah* was written under his patronage and with this encouragement.

The real name of Al-Biruni was Abu Rihan. He was born at Khiva in Central Asia in 973 A. D. He was immensely learned in Mathematics and Astronomy. Mahmud made him a prisoner at the time of his occupation of Khiva. Afterwards he accompanied Mahmud to India at his request and studied with great respect Sanskrit literature, Philosophy, Mathematics etc. His book on India is one of the most important sources for a history of the culture and civilization of this country. The drawbacks as well as the brighter sides of Hindu society both received sympathetic treatment at his hand.

Muhammad of Ghur : In the 12th century the Turkish rulers of the small principality of Ghur lying between Ghazni and Herat became gradually powerful. In the second half of the century the ruler of Ghur was Ghiyas-ud-din. His younger brother, Muizz-ud-din Mahammad or Muhammad of Ghur, was the ruler of Ghazni and the commander-in-chief of the army of Ghur. He was the founder of Turkish rule in North India. Though he showed his skill as a general in his campaign against the Hindus, he was not a military genius like Mahmud. He aimed at fulfilling his objective by any means. He was not a mere plunderer like Mahmud, but wanted to establish a permanent Muslim empire in India. And he achieved success in this. The repeated invasions of Mahmud and other reasons had weakened the Hindu kingdoms of North India. That is why Muhammad of Ghur was able to lay the foundation of Turkish rule in India.

In 1175 Muhammad attacked Multan and captured it. He led a campaign to Gujarat in 1178, but was defeated by Bhima II of the Chaulukya dynasty. In 1182 he established his rule over lower (southern) Sind. He had already annexed Peshawar from the descendants of Sultan Mahmud (1179 A. D.). Later on Sialkot and Lahore fell to him (1185-86 A. D.).

Occupation of
Sind and Punjab

After occupying Sind and the Punjab Muhammad of Ghur began a struggle with Prithviraj III, the Chauhan ruler of Delhi and Ajmer. Prithviraj was then the most powerful Hindu King of North India. The geographical position of his kingdom was such that the Muslims could not enter the Gangetic valley unless they occupied it. Had the Hindu kings of North India united to resist Muhammad's advance, it would not perhaps have been possible for the invader to penetrate beyond the Punjab. But even in this hour of grave peril for the country the Hindu Kings failed to appreciate the need for unity against the common enemy. Jayachandra, the Gahadvala king of Kanauj, was an enemy of Prithviraj. There is no historical basis for the tradition that Prithviraj carried away Samyukta, the daughter of Jayachandra, while she was holding court with the object of choosing a bridegroom for herself, and married her. This story is related in the Hindi epic *Prithviraj-Raso*, but it is extremely doubtful whether the composer of the epic, Chand Bardai, was the court-poet of Prithviraj. Whatever the truth might be, there is no doubt that the enmity between these two powerful rulers of North India paved the way for the victory of Muhammad of Ghur. In 1191 Prithviraj defeated Muhammad at Tarain near Thaneswar. But in the second battle of Tarain next year the wheels of fortune turned. This time Muhammad came with a large army and Prithviraj was defeated and killed. The Chauhan kingdom came under the occupation of Muhammad of Ghur.

Reasons for
Prithviraj's defeat

Within a few years of Prithviraj's defeat Turkish rule was established from Sind to Bengal. Qutb-ud-din Aibak, one of the generals of Muhammad of Ghur, occupied Delhi, Ajmer

Meerut, Aligarh and other places. In 1194, at the battle of Chandwar, Jayachandra lost to Muhammad and was killed. The Gahadvala kingdom came under Muslim occupation. The Muslims plundered Banaras. In 1195 and 1198 Qutb-ud-din Aibak invaded Gujarat and plundered the Chaulukya capital, Anhilvada. Qutb-ud-din was then left in charge of Muhammad's possessions in India. In 1202 Qutb-ud-din captured Kalanjar.

While Qutb-ud-din was establishing the sway of Muhammad of Ghur over North India, a Muslim adventurer, Ikhtiyar-ud-din Bakhtyar Khalji, annexed Bihar and West Bengal. This Turkish conqueror perhaps came to India as a follower of Muhammad of Ghur. After the battle of Tarain he advanced towards the east with an army and occupied Bihar and West Bengal.

In 1203 A. D., on the death of his elder brother, Ghiyas-ud-din, Muhammad of Ghur became the ruler of Ghur, Ghazni and Delhi. He died at the hands of an assassin in 1206 A. D. As an empire-builder he occupies a very prominent place in the history of Asia. To try to conquer a vast country like India depending only on the very limited man-power and resources of the small state of Ghur bespeaks extraordinary courage and ambition. The reverses in Gujarat and in the first battle of Tarain did not weaken his spirit. With extraordinary perseverance, he fought innumerable battles for a period of 30 years to establish his mastery beyond challenge over Sind and the Gangetic valley.

Model Questions :

1. Write a short note on the Arab conquest of Sind.
2. Discuss the problem of the origin of the Rajputs.
3. Sketch the history of the Gurjara-Pratiharas.
4. Briefly indicate the progress of Muslim arms in Northern India under the houses of Ghazni and Ghur.
5. Sketch the parts played by Jaipal, Anandapal and Prithviraj Chauhan in resisting foreign invaders.
6. Briefly describe the conquests and invasions of Sultan Mahmud of Ghazni and give an estimate of his character.
7. Describe the Indian conquests of Muhammad of Ghur and explain their importance.

PART TWO

CHAPTER 14

The Delhi Sultanate : The "Slave" Kings

Origin of Sultanate of Delhi : Muhammad of Ghur died in 1206 A. D. without leaving any male issue and as a result his empire in Afghanistan and North India split up into several parts. Ghur came under the rule of one of his brother's sons. A slave of his, Taj-ud-din, occupied Ghazni. Sind came under the rule of another slave, Nasir-ud-din. Muhammad's most powerful slave, Qutb-ud-din, established himself in Delhi. From this time Delhi became the centre of Muslim power in India ; the link with Ghazni snapped.

Three of the Turkish Sultans who ruled in Delhi in the 13th century A. D.—Qutb-ud-din, Iltutmish and Ghiyas-ud-din Balban—were slaves in early life. That is why the first Muslim dynasty of Delhi is known as the "Slave dynasty".

Qutb-ud-din (1206-1210 A. D.) : After the death of Muhammad of Ghur, Qutb-ud-din ruled independently in Delhi for only four years. During this period he had no great achievement to his credit. Nasir-ud-din, the ruler of Sind, recognised his overlordship. His political influence was felt from the Punjab and Sind to West Bengal. He fought Taj-ud-din, the ruler of Ghazni, and wrested it from him. However, within a very short period Taj-ud-din recovered Ghazni.

Qutb-ud-din won renown for his liberality and charity and came to be known as *lakh baksh* (giver of lakhs). He laid the foundation of the famous Qutb Minar, in Delhi. The pillar was named after Khwaja Qutb-ud-din, a well-known saint of the time. Qutb built two mosques in Delhi and Ajmer.

Iltutmish (1211-1236 A. D.) : Qutb-ud-din was succeeded for a very short time by Aram Shah, his son or adopted son, who came to the throne with the help of the nobles of Lahore.

Within a very short period Iltutmish, the governor of Budaun and son-in-law of Qutb-ud-din, defeated Aram Shab, made him a prisoner and ascended the throne with the help of the nobles of Delhi.

Iltutmish belonged to the Turkish aristocracy. His brothers, jealous of him, sold him as slave and Qutb-ud-din bought him. With his remarkable talents Iltutmish pleased his master, got the governorship of Budaun and married his daughter. By helping Iltutmish acquire the throne, the nobles of the capital selected the right man for ruling over the newly founded empire.

After coming to the throne Iltutmish crushed revolts in different provinces and made his position secure. Nasir-ud-din had revolted in Sind and was out to occupy the Punjab. Iltutmish drove him away from Lahore in 1217 A. D. In 1228 Nasir-ud-din's defeat was complete and when he died suddenly Sind became part of the empire of Delhi. Taj-ud-din, the ruler of Ghazni, was driven away by an enemy and occupied the Punjab. In 1216 he was defeated by Iltutmish and became his prisoner. The fortresses of Gwalior and Ranthambhor had been re-occupied by the respective Hindu rulers. Iltutmish recovered these fortresses. A review of these revolts will show that the newly founded Turkish empire was on the point of disintegration on the death of Qutb-ud-din. Iltutmish kept the empire intact by force of arms and skilful diplomacy.

The ruler of Bengal, Ali Mardan, had made himself independent by severing ties with Delhi during the reign of Qutb-ud-din (1211 A. D.). Ghiyas-ud-din succeeded him as the independent ruler of Bengal. When Iltutmish attacked Bihar Ghiyas-ud-din submitted to him (1225). But as soon as Iltutmish began the return journey to Delhi, Ghiyas-ud-din again rose in revolt and occupied Bihar. Iltutmish then sent his son, Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, to crush the revolt in Bengal. In 1227 Ghiyas-ud-din was defeated and killed. Nasir-ud-din Mahmud established his headquarters at Lakhnauti and began

to govern Bengal and Oudh. On his death in 1229 A. D. Bengal

Ikhtiyar-ud-din Balka Khalji occupied Bengal.

In 1230 A. D. Iltutmish himself came to Bengal with a large force. Ikhtiyar-ud-din was defeated and killed. Iltutmish appointed Ala-ud-din Jani as the governor of Bengal and then returned to Delhi. Within a short period Ala-ud-din was removed and replaced by Saifuddin as the governor of Bengal.

With the internal rebellions yet to be tackled completely, a terrible menace loomed over the north-western frontiers. In Mongol menace 1221 A. D. the leader of the ferocious Mongol hordes, Chingiz Khan, appeared near the Indus. The ruler of Khiva, who had lost his throne as a result of the invasion of Chingiz, came to the Punjab and sought shelter under Iltutmish. But Iltutmish did not agree to his request. Chingiz then plundered Sind and retreated towards Persia. The Mongols returned without entering India. Thus Iltutmish's skill in diplomacy averted the immediate Mongol danger to India. Within a short period, however, repeated Mongol invasions created a nightmarish condition in the north-west.

Finding himself free from the Mongol danger, Iltutmish again turned his attention to suppression of revolts and expansion of his dominions. After the occupation of Gwalior, Iltutmish attacked Malwa in 1234 A. D. He occupied Bhilsa and Ujjain in Malwa, but could not bring the whole of Malwa under his control. His last campaign was in the Salt Range region.

Pious Muslims regarded the Caliph as the head of the Muslim world. They, therefore, considered that no Muslim ruler had a right to govern unless he had first secured the Caliph's confirmation of his rule. In Allegiance to Caliph 1229 A. D. the Caliph of Baghdad sent an envoy with a robe of honour to Delhi as a token of his confirmation of Iltutmish's rule. This did not lead to any actual increase in the power of Iltutmish. But in the

eyes of the devout Muslims his rule was now invested with the necessary sanctity derived from law and religion. In his coins Iltutmish referred to himself as a representative of the Caliph.

Among the Slave Sultans Iltutmish was the greatest in ability and achievement. He contributed greatly to the building up of the Sultanate of Delhi. He converted the sporadic conquests of Muhammad of Ghur into a well-knit empire. Qutb-ud-din was not able to do this during his short reign. Had Iltutmish also not been able to achieve this, there would have been no unified Turkish empire in India. The

Achievements conquered areas would have reverted to the position of independent principalities under different rulers. Thus, from this angle, Iltutmish may be regarded as the real founder of the Sultanate of Delhi. But though he showed remarkable ability in the sphere of politics, he was not able to introduce any innovation in administrative affairs. Like Sher Shah and Akbar, he could not create an efficient administration to act as a firm base of his empire. By extending his patronage to many scholars and men of quality, he made Delhi one of the most civilized centres of the Muslim world. He completed the Qutb Minar and built a large mosque in Ajmer.

Ascendancy of nobility : During the reign of the Slave kings the Turkish nobles exercised extraordinary influence in political affairs. They wanted the Sultan to be guided by their advice in all matters. They also wanted the most important official posts to be reserved for them. They disliked it very much if any Afghan noble or Hindu convert to Islam exercised any influence or was given any position of authority. If any Sultan refused to accept their advice or demand, they immediately started intrigues to depose him. They became very active under the successors of Iltutmish. For their private interests they were even ready to ignore the larger interests of the empire. They were cut down to their proper size as a result of the firm policies pursued by Ghiyas-ud-din Balban and Ala-ud-din Khalji.

Raziyya (1236-1240 A. D.): Iltutmish had nominated his daughter, Raziyya, as his successor at the time of his death. But the powerful nobles were not ready to be ruled by a woman and put Rukn-ud-din Firuz, a son of Iltutmish, on the throne. But within a very short period, disgusted at the worthlessness of the new ruler, they raised Raziyya to the throne.

Showing excellent skill in diplomacy, Raziyya re-established peace and order in the empire. She consolidated her authority over the Punjab, Sind and Bengal. Contemporary historians tell us that the Malik and Amirs from Bengal to the port of Debal on the Arabian sea submitted to Raziyya.

Unfortunately Raziyya's success did not last long. By showing special favour to an Abyssinian slave, Jamal-ud-din Yaqut, she courted the displeasure of the Turkish nobles. Her brother, Muizz-ud-din Bahram, was declared Sultan. Raziyya was killed while a prisoner in the hands of the rebels.

There is no doubt that Raziyya excelled in many qualities. She could read the Koran with correct pronunciation. During the reign of Iltutmish she had taken part in administration and thus acquired administrative skill as well as political experience. She held court dressed openly as a man and was

Estimate not averse to leading her army in battle. Minhaj, the contemporary historian, has praised her as sagacious and just, noted her patronage of the learned and admired her other virtues. But all her qualities were wasted because the proud and power-loving nobles were not prepared to submit to the rule of a woman. Gaining the throne with their support, Raziyya lost it because they transferred their loyalty to another ruler.

Nasir-ud-din Mahmud (1246-1266 A. D.): After the tragic fall of Raziyya there was more or less a state of anarchy for a few years. Muizz-ud-din Bahram and Ala-ud-din Masud, son and grandson respectively of Iltutmish, ruled for six years (1240-1246 A. D.). Then the nobles placed Nasir-ud-din, a younger son of Iltutmish, on the throne. Nasir-ud-din was a weak, peace-loving and devoted to religion. He left his royal duties to his ministers and devoted himself to the pursuit of

learning and religious discussions. Among these ministers Ghiyas-ud-din Balban was a particularly remarkable character.

Ghiyas-ud-din Balban (1266-1287 A. D.): It was Balban who actually administered the Turkish empire under Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, who had married his daughter and left the administration of the empire to him. Balban kept the Punjab safe from repeated Mongol raids and suppressed the revolt of the Hindu chiefs and zamindars in the Ganges-Jumna Doab.

When Nasir-ud-din died in 1266 A. D. without leaving any issue, Balban ascended the throne of Delhi. He ruled for more than twenty years.

Balban belonged to the Turkish aristocracy. Falling into the hands of the Mongols, he was made a slave and after many reverses of fortune he was purchased by Iltutmish. Showing extraordinary qualities, he gradually climbed the ladder to success. Among the forty well-known Turkish slaves in Delhi ("The Forty"), he was one of the more prominent.

His long experience in politics had taught Balban that it was the power and ambition of the nobles which was largely responsible for the troubles in the Sultanate. So on ascending the throne he took measures to curb their power. A host of spies watched the activities of the nobles. Any noble found to be intriguing against the Sultan was punished severely. Sometimes suspected nobles were just got rid of through secret murder. Any noble or official who oppressed the subjects was given his due penalty. Balban won unique fame as a just ruler. Under various pretexts he forfeited many land-holdings and thus reduced the power of the nobles.

The historian Barani describes the condition of the country at the time of Balban's accession as follows: "Fear of the governing power, which is the basis of all good government and the source of the glory and splendour of states, had departed from the hearts of all men, and the country had fallen into a wretched condition". Balban succeeded in restoring "fear of the governing power" in "the hearts of all men".

In order to demarcate clearly the difference in the political and social status of the Sultan and the nobles, he introduced the Persian ceremonials in his court. He was always sensitive about the "king's superhuman awe and status". Jest and laughter, wine and gambling—all these had no place in his court. The austere atmosphere of the court made it clear that the Sultan was above all his subjects and that even the powerful and rich nobles were the Sultan's vassals and retained their position at his pleasure.

The Sultanate could not be made secure only by cutting the power and status of the nobles. Balban appreciated the need for a large army to prevent internal revolt and resist Mongol invasion. He, therefore, introduced some reforms in the armed services. The cavalry and the infantry were placed in charge of reliable and experienced generals. In the Ganges-Jumna Doab Iltutmish had given land to many cavalymen in return for military services. The descendants of these cavalymen rendered no military service, though they enjoyed the land. Balban tried to change this position in order to improve the efficiency of his army, but was not entirely successful.

Balban never neglected to put down internal rebellion with an iron hand. He suppressed the turbulent Rajput tribes of Mewat (Alwar in Rajasthan). The no less turbulent Hindus of the Ganges-Jumna Doab had entirely closed the roads between Delhi and Bengal. Balban suppressed them by severe military measures. The rebel Hindus of Katehr (Rohilkhand, U. P.) were also put down ruthlessly. In his campaign in the Salt Range area he suppressed his Hindu antagonists. Balban was successful in establishing peace and order in the region round about Delhi. Long afterwards Barani, the historian, was able to attest that the roadways became safe from robbers and thieves from the time of Balban.

The most serious revolt in Balban's reign occurred in Bengal. Being far away from the capital (Delhi), the governors

of Bengal seized every opportunity to defy the Sultan and declare independence. In Balban's time
 Revolt of Tughril Khan in Bengal Mughis-ud-din Tughril Khan (1268-1281 A. D.) followed the example of his predecessors, declared independence and issued coins in his own name. Balban sent successively two governors of Oudh to crush the revolt, but both of them failed. Then Balban himself, accompanied by his son Bughra Khan, arrived in Bengal with a large army. Tughril was defeated and killed at Sonargaon (near Dacca). Balban returned to Lakhnauti and meted out terrible punishment to the followers of Tughril (1281 A. D.). On either side of the principal bazar a row of stakes was set up and on them the members of Tughril's family and his adherents were impaled. Then Balban entrusted the governorship of Bengal to Bughra Khan and returned Delhi. Before leaving, Balban told his son: "Understand me and forget not that if the governors of Hind or Sind, of Malwa or Gujarat, of Lakhnauti or Sonargaon shall draw the sword and become rebels to the throne of Delhi, then such punishment as has fallen upon Tughril and his dependants will fall upon them, their wives, their children, and all their adherents". This horrible revenge throws light on Balban's methods in politics and administration.

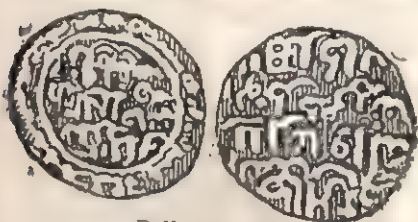
Balban did not stop at maintaining internal order. He was always on the alert against Mongol attacks in the north-west. At one time his courtiers implored him to conquer Malwa and Gujarat. Balban's reply was that Mongol menace he would not like to see Delhi devastated by the Mongols, as was the fate of the Caliph's capital Baghdad. As he had to deploy a large army to guard the frontiers, it was not possible for him to venture on fresh conquests.

The important frontier province, Multan-Dipalpur, was at first ruled by Balban's cousin, Sher Khan. On his death the post went to Muhammad Khan, Balban's eldest son. Though an able warrior, he was more a patron of learning. Both Amir Khusrau and Amir Hasan started their literary career under

the patronage of Muhammad. He invited the great Persian poet, Sadi, to visit India, but Sadi could not accept the invitation owing to his old age. In 1285 A. D. Muhammad died while fighting the Mongols. This was a grievous blow to the aged Sultan, Balban, and he died soon after. Balban just warded off the Mongol attacks and that only temporarily; theirs was an ever-present menace in the Punjab. The Mongols were active long after Balban's death.

By preventing Mongol attacks, by crushing internal revolts and curbing the power of the nobles, Balban made the base of the Delhi Sultanate firmer. He did not waste his energy and resources on new conquests, for he knew that it was more of a necessity to preserve the territory already conquered than to venture on fresh conquests. In this he was unusually far-sighted. He had been able to a great extent to remove the main drawbacks of the Delhi Sultanate. He was, however, not able to introduce any innovation in administration in order to place the Sultanate on a firmer base. The security of the Sultanate as also maintenance of internal peace and order depended on the personal character and activities of the Sultan. Balban's

firm but able administration ensured peace, order and justice internally. A contemporary historian has written that with the death of Balban, who was almost a father to his subjects,



Balban's coin

the life and property of the people were no longer secure. Some rulers, nobles and scholars of Central Asia, who had left their countries as a result of Mongol oppression, found shelter in Balban's court. The greatest poet of India during the middle ages, Amir Khusrau, started his poetic career during Balban's reign.

Fall of Slave Dynasty : After the death of Balban his grandson Kaiqubad, son of the governor of Bengal, Bughra Khan, ruled in Delhi for three years (1287-1290 A. D.). When

this worthless young man suffered an attack of paralysis, his infant son, Kayumars, was placed on the throne. Taking advantage of the weakness of the Sultanate, a general named Jalal-ud-din Khalji attacked Delhi and ascended the throne after murdering Kaiqubad. Thus the Slave dynasty came to an end and, according to Barani, the Turks lost the sceptre for ever. The Slave Sultans were Turkish in origin. The Khaljis, though Turkish by birth, were usually regarded as Afghans. As a result of their long residence in the warmer regions of Afghanistan they had adopted Afghan habits of life.

Model Questions :

1. Sketch the reign of Iltutmish. Why is he called the greatest ruler of the Slave Dynasty?
2. Write a note on Raziyya.
3. Describe the reign of Balban.

CHAPTER 15

The Sultanate of Delhi : Khaljis and Tughluqs

Jalal-ud-din Khalji (1290-1296 A. D.): The founder of the Khalji dynasty, Jalal-ud-din, ascended the throne of Delhi in his old age. Those troubled times needed a stern ruler like Balban. The aged Jalal-ud-din had no such sternness in his character. He showed clemency towards rebels and was even reluctant to mete out due punishment to robbers and thieves.

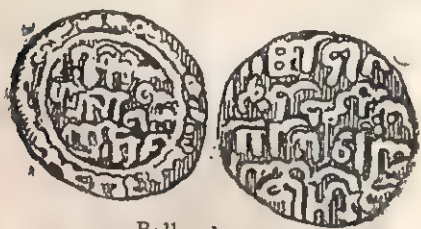
In 1292 A. D. he resisted a Mongol invasion. Many Mongols embraced Islam and began to reside in Delhi permanently. They were known as the "New Muslims".

Jalal-ud-din's nephew, Ala-ud-din, led an expedition to the Deccan without his permission and defeated Ramchandra, the Yadava king of Devagiri. In 1296 A. D., after returning from this expedition, Ala-ud-din killed the aged Sultan and ascended the throne of Delhi.

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Ala-ud-din (1296-1316 A. D.) : Ala-ud-din was the nephew of Jalal-ud-din. The aged Sultan had particular affection for him. He gave his daughter in marriage to Ala-ud-din and made him the governor of Kara and Oudh. Ala-ud-din was an ambitious man. He raided Malwa and plundered Bhilsa. There he heard of the riches of the Yadava kingdom of Devagiri. In 1294 he crossed the Vindhya and advanced towards the Deccan. This was an unprecedented military feat ; no Muslim army had before this crossed the Vindhya. Ramchandra, the Yadava king of Devagiri, could not resist this sudden invasion. He made peace with Ala-ud-din by offering him huge quantities of gold and precious jewels. Then Singhana, son of Ramchandra who was away from Devagiri at the time of Ala-ud-din's invasion, returned and attacked the invaders. But he was defeated and Ala-ud-din left the kingdom after collecting an immense booty and occupying the province of Ellichpur (in Berar) as indemnity.

After returning to Kara, Ala-ud-din lured the aged Sultan, Jalal-ud-din, to the place with the pretext of offering him the riches he had gained in the Deccan. When Jalal-ud-din arrived at Kara, he was murdered. Then Ala-ud-din captured Delhi and ascended the throne. Jalal-ud-din's sons were put to death.

After occupying the throne of Delhi Ala-ud-din declared his ambition to conquer the world like Alexander. Some of his coins refer to him as Alexander II. But Ala-ud-din had keen political insight and knew his limitations. So he refrained from sending any expedition outside India and concentrated on conquering the Hindu kingdoms of India. Long after the death of Iltutmish the Sultanate of Delhi embarked upon territorial expansion.

Gujarat was in those days a prosperous, independent Hindu kingdom. It was ruled by Karna belonging to the Baghela branch of the Chaulukys. In 1297 Ala-ud-din sent an army under Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan with a view to conquering Gujarat. Karna was defeated and his territories were occupied by

Expedition to
Devagiri

Conquests in
North India :
(1) Gujarat

Ala-ud-din's army. He took shelter, along with his daughter, with Ramchandra, the king of Devagiri. His queen Kamala Devi was made a prisoner and became an inmate of Ala-ud-din's harem.

Ala-ud-din next turned his attention to Rajputana. As long as the impregnable fortresses of Rajputana remained in the hands of the Rajputs, Muslim rule over Delhi could not be considered quite secure. The spirited Rajputs could have attacked Delhi and the adjoining areas (2) Rajputana at any time. Moreover, it would not have been possible to maintain links between Delhi and Gujarat unless Rajputana was brought to submission. That is why Ala-ud-din captured Ranthambhor and Chitor one after another.

Though Ranthambhor had fallen to the Muslims several times before this, they never could occupy it permanently. In 1299 A. D. Ala-ud-din sent Ulugh Khan and Nusrat Khan against the Chauhan ruler of Ranthambhor, Hamir. When they were defeated, Ala-ud-din himself went to Ranthambhor and captured the fort after a siege of one year (1301 A. D.). Hamir was killed and the fort placed under the charge of Ulugh Khan.

In 1303 A. D. Ala-ud-din occupied Chitor, the capital of Mewar. The Guhilot Rana, Ratan Singh, was at that time the ruler of Mewar. Ala-ud-din himself conducted the campaign against Chitor. It was renamed after capture as Khizrabad and put under the charge of the Sultan's eldest son, Khizr Khan. After some time—most probably after Ala-ud-din's death—Chitor was recovered by Rana Hamir of the Guhilot dynasty. Tod, the famous chronicler of the Rajputs, has written that Ala-ud-din's main objective in attacking Chitor was to get hold of Padmini, the beautiful wife of Rana Bhim Singh. But we know for certain that at the time of Ala-ud-din's invasion Bhim Singh was not the ruler of Chitor. There hardly any contemporary evidence to provide a historical basis for the story of Padmini.

After occupation of Ranthambhor and Chitor, the two

fortresses of Rajputana, Ala-ud-din directed his attention to Malwa. He had plundered Bhilsa before coming to the throne. In 1305 A.D. his general, Ain-ul-Malik Multani, occupied the important cities of Mandu, Ujjain, Dhar and Chanderi. Malwa became a part



of the Delhi Sultanate. Ain-ul-Malik was appointed governor of the newly conquered province.

Thus, except Kashmir, Nepal and Assam, the whole of North India came under Ala-ud-din's rule. He now thought once more of South India. The accumulated riches of the prosperous cities of the Deccan fired his imagination. He sent four expeditions to the Deccan. These were headed

by his great favourite, Malik Kafur. This talented slave was acquired by Nusrat Khan during the campaign in Gujarat. Afterwards his extraordinary qualities attracted Ala-ud-din's attention and won his favour. He took the Turkish banner of victory up to Cape Comorin. The extension of the Turkish empire to the Deccan was Ala-ud-din's greatest achievement. After a long time India again saw political unity : North and South India were again brought together.

The Yadava ruler of Devagiri in the western part of the Deccan, Ramchandra, had submitted to Ala-ud-din in 1294 A. D. He had not, however, sent tribute to Delhi for several years. Moreover, he had given shelter to the refugee king of Gujarat, Karna. In order to bring him to submission and take Devala Devi, Karna's daughter, to Delhi, Malik Kafur started towards the Deccan with a vast army in 1306 A. D. Karna was defeated on the way and Devala Devi captured. She was later given in marriage to Ala-ud-din's eldest son, Khizr Khan, at Delhi. When Malik Kafur reached Devagiri, Ramchandra submitted to him without putting up a fight. Afterwards Ramchandra went to Delhi and satisfied the Sultan with costly presents. He was recognised as the vassal king of Devagiri.

Next, Ala-ud-din planned to subjugate the Kakatiya kingdom of Warangal in the eastern part of the Deccan. King Prataprudra was defeated by Malik Kafur. He submitted to Delhi and agreed to pay annual tribute.

In 1310 A. D. Ala-ud-din sent Malik Kafur to occupy the Hoysala dominion of Dvarasamudra (Mysore region). Kafur defeated the king, Vira Ballala III, and captured his capital. Vira Ballala saved himself by submitting to Delhi and offering costly presents. Kafur then attacked the Pandya kingdom of Madura in the "Far South". The Pandyas had already been weakened by struggle among royal princes for the throne.

Kafur plundered Madura and secured a vast booty. He probably advanced as far as Rameswaram and built a mosque there.

Meanwhile Ramchandra, the king of Devagiri, had died and had been succeeded by his spirited son Singhana. His loyalty to Delhi was not above suspicion. After Kafur's return to Delhi from Madura, Singhana ceased paying tribute. In 1313 A. D. Kafur marched on Devagiri, defeated and killed Singhana. He then proceeded farther south, plundered the Hoysala kingdom and occupied two important ports on the western coast—Dabhal and Chaul. Thus, almost the whole of South India came under Delhi's suzerainty. The Turkish Sultanate reached the zenith of its extent and power.

While Ala-ud-din was extending his dominions in North and South India, he was at the same time preoccupied with the suppression of internal revolts and resistance to invasions from outside. During the attack on Ranthambhor, one of his nephews engineered an attempt on his life. Two others revolted in Oudh and Budaun. At the same time a disgruntled officer named Haji Maula rebelled in Delhi. Ala-ud-din put down all these revolts with an iron hand. In order to prevent recurrence of such revolts he took stern measures. Numerous spies were engaged to bring to the Sultan's immediate attention all developments in his territories. "The system of reporting went to such lengths that the nobles dared not speak aloud even in the largest places, and if they had anything to say they communicated by signs." Drinking of wine was totally prohibited. Later, this measure was partially relaxed and the nobles were permitted to take wine in their homes. Measures were also adopted to ensure that the nobles did not enter into marriage relations or take part in social gatherings among themselves without the prior consent of the Sultan. Many holdings in land were forfeited and the tax-collectors were instructed to charge the revenues at the maximum possible rates. The Hindus were the particular victims of Draconian economic measures. The object

was to keep them deliberately impoverished so that they might not go against the Sultan in any way.

As in the reign of Balban, during Ala-ud-din's time also the Mongols were an ever-present menace to north-west India.

During the first half of Ala-ud-din's reign the Mongol invasions frontier region was in charge of a very efficient officer named Jafar Khan. His name was a terror to the ferocious Mongols even after his death. In 1303 A. D. a vast Mongol horde plundered Delhi. Ala-ud-din took temporary shelter in the fortress of Siri. Later, he repaired the old, and built new, forts in the frontier areas. The valiant general Ghazi Malik was put in charge of the frontier. The Mongols repeatedly invaded Punjab till 1308 A. D., but were not successful owing to the stiff resistance put up by Ghazi Malik.

It has already been mentioned that during Jalal-ud-din's time many Mongols embraced Islam, were known as the "New Muslims" and became permanent residents of Delhi. During Ala-ud-din's reign they were involved in a plot against the Sultan. As a result thirty thousand "New Muslims" were massacred under Ala-ud-din's order.

To ensure the success of his policy of territorial expansion, protection of frontiers and stern administrative measures Ala-ud-din had to maintain a vast army. It was not easy to meet the expenses of the huge army from the Sultan's treasury. Ala-ud-din, therefore, took measures to reduce the expenses. Each soldier was paid a salary of 234 tankas. To make it possible for the soldiers to maintain themselves and their families with this modest salary, Ala-ud-din controlled the prices of essential commodities. This policy led indirectly to a reduction in the cost of living. The prices of wheat, barley, rice, cloth, sugar, ghee, oil, salt etc. and horses and cattle were fixed. The expenses on account of attendants were also consequently reduced. The strict enforcement of rules made it impossible for the dishonest merchants and shop-keepers to manipulate prices. Any shop-owner giving less in weight was punished with slicing of flesh of equal weight from his body. Officers known as *Shahna-i-Mandi* (Superin-

tendent of Market) enforced the Sultan's orders. Grain was kept stored in the royal granaries at Delhi in huge quantities. The movement of grains was supervised by the *Shahna-i-Mandi*. Once in time of drought the *Shahna-i-Mandi* suggested a slight increase in prices of grain and for this offence he received 21 stripes. How strictly the Sultan's orders were enforced is shown by this incident. That Ala-ud-din succeeded in his objective for the time being there seems to be no doubt. Barani, the contemporary historian, has stated that even in times of drought there was no shortage of grain. However, price control was effective only in Delhi and the adjoining areas. It could not be enforced in the distant parts of the empire. This measure went against the interests of peasants and artisans, for the prices fixed for their products were below what these should have been.

Ala-ud-din's policy of taxation was particularly oppressive for the Hindus. They had to surrender one-half of their produce. Moreover, there were grazing and house taxes. So strictly was this policy enforced that the Hindu landholders "were not able to ride on horseback, to find weapons, to get fine clothes, or to indulge in betel." All provinces were brought under the same Revenue system revenue law, as if they were all one village. The revenue officials became objects of public hatred as a result of their methods of extortion. Barani tells us that nobody wanted to give his daughter in marriage to a revenue official.

In the early stages of Turkish rule in India the *Shariat* (Islamic Law) and the *-Ulema* (religious preceptor) were particularly influential in affairs of state. The rulers tried to conform to the *Shariat*. Ala-ud-din freed himself from the influence of the *Ulema*. He was of the opinion that secular matters should be decided according to secular ideas. To a *qazi* he said, "I do not know whether this is lawful or unlawful (*i. e.*, whether it is sanctioned by Islamic Law or not); whatever I think is for the good of the State, or suitable for the emergency, that I decree." Thus Ala-ud-din laid the foundation of a state free

from the domination of the *Shariat*. In this, he was followed by Muhammad bin Tughluq. But though free from the influence of the *Ulema*, Ala-ud-din failed to pursue a liberal policy towards the Hindus. The time was not ripe for a really secular state in that age.

In the last years of Ala-ud-din's life Malik Kafur became practically all-powerful. His intrigues disturbed the peace in Ala-ud-din's family. Khizr Khan was sent to prison. There was revolt in Gujarat as a result of the murder of its governor. In Devagiri Harapal, the son-in-law of Ramchandra, tried to assert independence. In the midst of these disorders Ala-ud-din died. There is reason to suspect that he was poisoned by Malik Kafur.

Though he was a ruthless ruler, Ala-ud-din's patronage of art and literature revealed a refined and tender side of his character. He was probably illiterate. Still he had great liking for literature. The famous poet in Persian, Amir Khusrau, belonged to his court and it was during Ala-ud-din's reign that he composed his finest works. Some of Khusrau's books relate the events of the expeditions to Chitor and the Deccan. The most respected Muslim saint of the period was Nizam-ud-din Aulia and Amir Khusrau was his disciple.

Ala-ud-din built a new city named "Siri" to the north-east of the old fort of Prithviraj. Inside the stone fort at the centre of this city there was an extremely elegant palace supported by a thousand columns. No trace of it is left today. Ala-ud-din added a beautiful gateway to the huge mosque built by Qutb-ud-din and Iltutmish. This is known as "Alai Darwaza".

The treachery and ruthlessness which formed part of Ala-ud-din's character were perhaps not unnatural for that age. The famous traveller from Africa, Ibn Batutah, has described him as one of the greatest of the Sultans of Delhi. Ala-ud-din's reign forms a very important chapter in the history of the

middle ages in India. He was the first to have ruled the greatest empire yet among the Sultans of Delhi. After

(1) Unification of North and South India

centuries of disunity, India was once again brought under one sceptre. The North was united with the regions beyond the

Vindhya, though the South was rather an unwilling partner. The local dynasties in the South had not yet been totally uprooted. Moreover, by destroying temples etc. the Muslim invaders had created great hatred against themselves among the local Hindus. However,

(2) Cohesion of administrative system

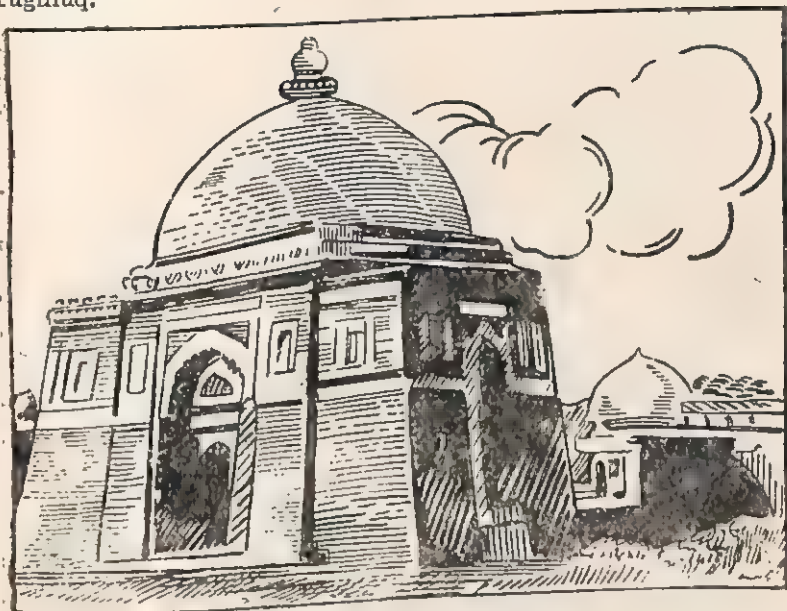
Ala-ud-din paved the way for the rise of the Bahmani Kingdom, which foreshadowed the establishment of Mughal rule in the Deccan.

Secondly, Ala-ud-din gave some sort of administrative cohesion to the Turkish empire which for a century had been little more than a collection of 'military fiefs'. He was the first far-sighted Turkish empire-builder. In building up his empire he did not confine his attention to military affairs alone. By freeing the empire from the influence of the *Shariat* he showed a new way to govern the state. By his patronage of art and literature he preserved the finest traditions of the best rulers in the East.

Establishment of Tughluq dynasty : After Ala-ud-din's death Shihab-ud-din Umar, his minor son, was put on the throne by Malik Kafur. But another son of Ala-ud-din, Qutb-ud-din Mubarak, occupied the throne after murdering Malik Kafur and ruled for four years (1316-1320 A. D.). He put down revolts in Gujarat and Devagiri. The Yadava Kingdom was placed in charge of a Muslim governor. An expedition was sent to Madura. But the pleasure-loving Mubarak could not rule for long. In 1320 A. D. his unworthy favourite Khusrau murdered him and occupied the throne of Delhi. Khusrau was in his turn killed by Ghazi Malik, governor of Dipalpur in the Punjab, who had defeated him with the assistance of influential Turkish nobles. After this Ghazi Malik ascended the throne.

Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq (1320-1325 A.D.): After his

accession, Ghazi Malik came to be known as Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq.



Tomb of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq

Jauna Khan, the eldest son of Ghiyas-ud-din, attacked the Kakatiya kingdom of Warangal twice. The Kakatiya king, Prataprudra II, was defeated and sent to Delhi. While returning from the South, Jauna Khan attacked Orissa (Jajnagar) and captured some elephants.

To crush a revolt in Bengal Ghiyas-ud-din himself came to the province with a large army. The rebels lost. Re-establishing his authority in Bengal, the Sultan went back to Delhi, but he died in an accident near the capital. Many historians think that this accident was really a pre-planned plot of Jauna Khan.

Muhammad bin Tughluq (1325-1351 A.D.) : After the death of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq his son Jauna Khan ascended the throne of Delhi and came to be known as Muhammad bin Tughluq. His personal character is the key to the history of his rule. Barani, the historian, knew him intimately and observes, "I cannot help remarking that Sultan Muhammad

was one of the wonders of the creation. His contradictory qualities were beyond the grasp of knowledge and common sense." Muhammad was a skilled hunter and an excellent warrior. His generosity had become a proverb. Barani observes that what Hatim and others gave in one year, Muhammad bin Tughluq gave away at a time. He was not addicted to wine nor was he pleasure-loving. He had deep faith in, and reverence for, Islam. But like Ala-ud-din Khalji,

Character he also curbed the influence of the *Ulema*.

He was extraordinarily gifted in Astronomy, Mathematics, Science and other subjects. He was a connoisseur of literature and could himself compose fine verses in Persian. He was excellent in calligraphy. In no other Turkish Sultan of Delhi did so many qualities combine. Still Muhammad bin Tughluq failed as a ruler, for his character was not free from defects. Sometimes he did not hesitate to be ruthless to his subjects. He undertook serious measures without first considering the pros and cons and the possible consequences. He was rude in temper and extremely intolerant of opinions critical of him. That is why some historians consider him to have been an eccentric or insane person. The founding of a new capital at Devagiri, the decisions to launch campaigns against Khorasan and Iraq, the introduction of copper currency—all these clearly point to his eccentricity. Practical sense, which is the virtue of wise and cool-brained rulers, was conspicuous by its absence in this extraordinary character. His tactless measures hastened the fall of the Turkish empire in India. The disastrous consequences of his long rule were rooted in his character.

Within a short period of coming to the throne (1326-1327 A.D.). Muhammad raised the rates of taxes in the Ganges-Jumna Doab. The people could not pay the extra taxes and turned into rebels. Many left their land and fled to the forests. Muhammad was angry and sent an army to crush the revolt. The army dealt ruthlessly with the innocent peasants. Cultivation of land was hampered and famine came.

Muhammad bin Tughluq transferred his capital from Delhi

to the famous city of the Deccan, Devagiri (1326-1327 A. D.). It was re-named Daulatabad. After a few years Muhammad changed his mind. He re-transferred the capital to Delhi. By changing his capital twice, Muhammad only demonstrated his eccentricity and it did no good to his empire. Perhaps he switched the capital over to Devagiri in order to place Muslim rule in the Deccan on a firmer basis. Barani, the historian, points out the geographical importance of the new capital thus : "This place held a central situation. Delhi, Gujarat, Lakhnauti, Satgaon, Sonargaon, Telang, Ma'bar, Dorasamudra and Kampila were about equidistant from thence.....". But it was hardly possible to take adequate steps to resist Mongol invasion in the Punjab from distant Devagiri. It would also have been difficult to exercise necessary authority over Bengal from the new capital. There is no doubt that it was something unusual to set up a Muslim capital amidst the Hindu environment of the Deccan.

Ibn Batutah, the famous traveller from Africa, has related some fantastic stories as to the reasons for the transfer of capital. According to him, Muhammad bin Tughluq was angry at the abuses which people of Delhi hurled at him and he punished them by transferring the capital to Devagiri. It is difficult to believe that such an important decision was taken for so paltry a cause. Ibn Batutah has stated that each and every resident of Delhi was compelled to go to Devagiri. When two men, one lame and the other blind, refused to go to Devagiri, the lame man was killed and the blind man dragged all the way to Devagiri in such a manner that only a leg of his was all that reached the new capital ultimately. These stories are mere bazar gossips. There is no evidence that there was a wholesale transfer of population from Delhi.

Within a short period of the transfer of capital to Devagiri the Mongols invaded the Punjab and advanced as far as Delhi (1328-29 A. D.). Muhammad had taken no steps for protection of the frontier. He was, therefore, forced to buy off the Mongols with a huge sum. This was a change from the bold policy of resistance which

money were two—the ever-increasing cost of the army and the very liberal scale of charity. Anyhow, from the financial aspect, this reform was not basically unsound. However, Muhammad did not take necessary measures to ensure that the reform was a success in actual practice. He did not take steps to prevent the circulation of counterfeit coins. As a result, many people enriched themselves by circulating forged token currency. Barani says that the house of every Hindu became a mint. Foreign merchants refused to take token currency in exchange for their goods. As a result, trade almost came to a standstill. When Muhammad realised his mistake, he withdrew token currency from circulation and paid gold and silver coins in exchange for token currency. Though this measure safeguarded the interests of the people to a certain extent, the royal treasury suffered an extremely heavy drain.

Like Ala-ud-din Khalji, Muhammad bin Tughluq also dreamed of conquests. But he had not the practical sense of Ala-ud-din and as a result his attempts at conquest proved to be disastrous for the Sultanate. In 1337 A. D. Muhammad occupied the fort of Nagarkot in the Kangra district of the Punjab.

Next he established his authority over Qarajal in the Himalayan mountains (1337-1338 A. D.).

Some historians think that the campaign in Qarajal was part of a grand plan to conquer China and Tibet. But there is no evidence to support such a conclusion. During the Qarajal campaign the army of Muhammad had destroyed Buddhist monasteries. Toghan Timur, the Mongol emperor of

China, sent an embassy to Muhammad seeking his permission to rebuild the monasteries so destroyed. Muhammad, in reply, sent

Ibn Batutah to China with the message that according to Islamic Law the monasteries could not be rebuilt unless *jeziya* (poll tax) was paid (1342 A. D.).

Muhammad's dream of conquering Khorasan and Iran came to nothing. Instigated by the Khorasani nobles who had fled their country as a result of Mongol invasion, Muhammad

organised an army four hundred thousand strong for Khorasan and Iraq an expedition to Khorasan. But this army never left Delhi owing to lack of money. The geographical barriers to the success of such a campaign would not ultimately have prevented Muhammad, the dreamer, from actually setting out on his march to Khorasan, had there been money in plenty to finance it.

Muhammad's oppression and failure made his subjects resentful and they rose in revolt in many parts of the empire.

Revolts In 1335 A. D. Jalal-ud-din Ahsan revolted in Ma'bar (a strip of land on the eastern coast of Southern India). Muhammad himself came to the South, but his soldiers could not advance as far as Ma'bar as there was a sudden outbreak of epidemic. In consequence Ma'bar became independent. At Lahore the revolt of Amir Halajun was successfully put down. In 1335-36 A. D. the son of the governor of Daulatabad revolted, but the Sultan pardoned him. Bidar twice rose in rebellion. In East Bengal Malik Fakhr-ud-din declared independence. Ain-ul-Mulk, the governor of Oudh, revolted but was defeated. There was also revolt in Multan.

The Hindus of South India naturally did not fail to take advantage of the troubles in different parts of the empire to try to recover their independence. In 1336 A. D. was laid the foundation of the kingdom of Vijayangar. **Rise of independent kingdoms** At Devagiri the foreign Muslim nobles (*Amiran-i-Sadah*) rose in revolt and laid the foundation of the Bahmani kingdom. The revolt of the Amirs spread to Gujarat. Muhammad went first to Devagiri and then to Gujarat, but failed to suppress the revolts. While pursuing a rebel in Sind, he died, a broken man (1351 A. D.). Badauni, the historian, remarks, "And so the king was freed from his people and they from their king".

Ibn Batutah: Ibn Batutah, the famous traveller from Morocco in Africa, toured many countries of the world for many years. He came to India in 1333 A. D. through Egypt, Turkey, Syria and Afghanistan. He was appointed the *Qazi* of the

capital by Muhammad bin Tughluq. After occupying this high post for nearly eight years, he went as an envoy of Muhammad to China. He came to Bengal on his way to China. In his book, *Safarnamah*, we get important materials about Muhammad's reign. Though he sometimes mixed up history with gossip, he was nevertheless a keen and impartial witness of the Indian scene. His account has proved valuable in clearing up some of the more obscure aspects of Muhammad's rule. His remarks about the state of the country offer useful information.

Firoz Shah Tughluq (1351-1388 A. D.): Muhammad bin Tughluq had no male issue. So after his death, Firuz, the son of Rajab, Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq's younger brother, ascended the throne of Delhi. His mother was the daughter of a Rajput chief.

Within a short period after accession to the throne Firuz tried to re-establish the authority of Delhi over Bengal. An adventurer named Shams-ud-din Ilyas Shah had established an independent kingdom in South Bengal. He captured Lakhnauti and overthrew Ikhtiyar-ud-din Ghazi Shah of East Bengal.

When he invaded Tirhut, Firuz marched against him with a large army (1353 A. D.). Ilyas took shelter in the strong fort of Ekdala (in the Dinajpur district). Firuz returned to Delhi when his siege of Ekdala failed. A few years later, Firuz again came to Bengal at the request of Zafar Khan, who aspired to rule over East Bengal. Sikandar, the son and successor of Ilyas, took refuge in the fort and exchanged presents with Sikandar. He recognised the independence of Sikandar and returned to Delhi. Thus his two expeditions to Bengal failed to bring that province to submission.

On his return from Bengal Firuz led a plundering raid on Orissa. In 1361 he occupied the fort of Nagarkot in the Punjab hills. In 1362 he led an expedition to Sind, and after much suffering caused by famine and pestilence, compelled the rulers of Thatta to submit. He wisely refused to interfere in the affairs of the Bahmani kingdom in the Deccan.

In religious matters Firuz was intolerant ; he persecuted not only the Hindus but also the Shias and other Muslim 'heretics'. In his autobiography he proudly claims that he killed the 'leaders of infidelity', destroyed Hindu temples, and built mosques in their places. He encouraged the Hindus to embrace Islam by offering exemption from the *jeziya*. He was the first Sultan of Delhi who compelled the Brahmins to pay this poll-tax. This orthodox ruler claimed to be the Caliph's deputy in India and put the Caliph's name on his coins.

Firuz introduced many changes in the system of administration. He revived the *jagir* system which had been abolished by Ala-ud-din Khalji, making the nobles practically autonomous rulers of their fiefs. Thus the central administration was weakened. But the Sultan's measures connected with the land revenue were, on the whole, beneficial to the people. In judicial affairs Firuz rendered a great service to the people by abolishing torture and cruel forms of punishment. But he weakened the military organisation of the Sultanate by providing for hereditary succession in the army. He maintained a very large number of slaves. A zealous builder of towns and mosques, Firuz was the founder of towns like Jaunpur, Firuzabad and Fatehabad. For improvement of agriculture he excavated four important canals which increased the fertility of the Doab and the Delhi region. He built many madrasas and patronised learned Muslim scholars.

In his last years Firuz sank into senile decay. After his death (1388) his descendants fought for the throne. The last Sultan of the Tughluq dynasty was Nasir-ud-din Mahmud Shah.

Invasion of Timur : When the Sultanate was on the brink of dissolution Timur, the ruler of Samarqand and a ruthless conqueror, invaded India (1398). His real object was plunder, not conquest. After ravaging some parts of west Punjab and Sind he occupied Delhi. There Hindu prisoners numbering about 100,000 were massacred. The Tughluq Sultan, Nasir-ud-din Mahmud, made a feeble resistance. From Delhi

Timur marched to the northeast, occupying Meerut, Kangra and Jammu, and crossed the Indus in 1399. He 'inflicted on India more misery than had ever before been inflicted by any conqueror in a single invasion'.

Sayyid dynasty : Before departing from India Timur appointed Khizr Khan, the former ruler of Multan, the governor of the Punjab. After the death of the last of the Tughluqs, Mahmud Shah, Khizr Khan occupied the throne of Delhi in 1414 A. D. and ruled till 1421 A. D. He did not use the title "Sultan", as he considered himself only a representative of Timur's son and successor, Shah Rukh, and sent him occasional tribute. He was perhaps a Sayyid by birth. Khizr Khan's rule was limited to Delhi, the Doab and the Punjab.

Khizr Khan's son and successor, Mubarak (1421-1434 A. D.), took the title of "Shah". After him two Sayyids—Muhammad Shah (1435-1445 A. D.) and Ala-ud-din Alam Shah (1445-1451 A. D.)—ruled one after another. Taking advantage of Alam Shah's weakness, the Afghan governor of the Punjab, Bahlul Lodi, occupied the throne of Delhi.

Lodi dynasty (1451-1526 A. D.) : Bahlul Lodi was the first Afghan Sultan of Delhi. He had a long reign (1451-1489 A. D.).

Bahlul Lodi He was able and ambitious, but it was beyond his capacity to restore the Sultanate to its former glory and power. It was also not in his power to make the institution of monarchy all-powerful, as was done by Balban. The arrogant Afghan nobles did not regard the Sultan as their superior, but considered him as their equal. Bahlul Lodi conquered the kingdom of Jaunpur and placed it in charge of his son, Barbak Shah. Kalpi (Jalaun district, U. P.), Dholpur and Gwalior fell into his hands. He suppressed revolts in Mewat and in the Doab.

After the death of Bahlul Lodi, his third son Sikandar Lodi ascended the throne (1489-1517 A. D.). His elder brother, Barbak Shah, who was the ruler of Jaunpur, at first refused to recognise the suzerainty of his younger brother. However, he ultimately submitted to Sikandar. When Husain Shah, the former Sharqi Sultan of Jaunpur, who had been dethroned by

Bahlul Lodi, tried to stage a come-back, Sikandar defeated him.

Sikandar Lodi He next occupied Bihar. When he tried to invade Bengal, Husain Shah entered into a non-aggression pact with him and thus stopped his march. Sikandar was not only concerned with the extension of his dominions. By ruling with a firm hand, he recovered to some extent the lost prestige of the Sultan. With the help of an efficient espionage system he kept himself posted with all developments in his kingdom. The abolition of the agricultural tax and lifting of restrictions on trade made the people better off financially. But like Firuz Tughluq, he was an orthodox Muslim and oppressed the Hindus. He destroyed some Hindu temples of Mathura and forbade the Hindus to bathe in the Jumna. He used to compose verses in Persian. Under his order a Sanskrit treatise on medicine was translated into Persian. Sikandar founded the city of Agra in 1504 A. D. Later on, under the Mughals, Agra became the capital of the empire.

After the death of Sikandar Lodi his son Ibrahim Lodi succeeded him to the throne of Delhi (1517-1526 A. D.). He incurred the hostility of the Afghan nobles by trying to curb their influence and arrogance. He forced the Hindu King of Gwalior to submit to him and started a campaign against Rana Sangram Singh of Mewar. The discontent of the Afghan nobles resulted in foreign invasion. At the invitation of Daulat Khan Lodi, the governor of the Punjab, Babur, the ruler of Kabul, invaded India. In the first battle of Panipat (1526 A. D.) Ibrahim Lodi was defeated and killed. Thus ended the Lodi dynasty and the Afghan supremacy. Delhi became the seat of the Mughal power.

Model Questions :

1. Briefly describe the reign of Alauddin Khalji, with special reference to his conquests and his methods of administration.
2. Describe Alauddin Khalji's administrative system. Why is he considered as a great ruler?
3. Briefly narrate the history of the Tughluq Sultans of Delhi.
4. Estimate the character of Muhammad bin Tughluq and give an account of his reign.
5. Give some account of the services rendered to the people by Firuz Shah Tughluq.

CHAPTER 16

Bengal and Bahmani Kingdom

With the decline of the Delhi Sultanate in the 14th century some independent Hindu and Muslim kingdoms were set up in North and South India. Of these, Bengal in the north and the Bahmani and Vijayanagar Kingdoms in the south were more important than others. In the 16th and the 17th centuries the Mughal emperors of Delhi established political unity in India by again bringing these kingdoms under their sceptre.

Bengal : The expedition of Ikhtiyar-ud-din Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khalji laid the foundation of Muslim power in Bengal. The Muslim rulers of Bengal time and again rose against the authority of Delhi. Iltutmish, Ghiyas-ud-din Balban, Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq, Firuz Shah Tughluq—all of them had to undertake campaigns in Bengal for putting down rebellions. After the failure of the two expeditions of Firuz Shah Tughluq Bengal's independence was firmly established.

Shams-ud-din Ilyas Shah and his descendants ruled independently in Bengal for a long period (1342-1414 A. D.). Ilyas Shah occupied Tirhut (North Bihar) and attacked Nepal, devastating the capital, Kathmandu. He next led a campaign to Orissa and advanced as far as the Chilka Lake. He increased his power by defeating the then ruler of Sonargaon. Even though he was defeated by Firuz Shah, he did not lose his hold over Bengal. Towards the close of his reign he invaded Kamrup. Nothing is known about his character and administrative system.

Sikandar Shah, son of Shams-ud-din, preserved the freedom of Bengal by successfully resisting the attack of Firuz Shah Tughluq. He built the famous Adina mosque of Pandua. Ghiyas-ud-din Azam Shah, son of Sikandar, was an able ruler. He was an admirer of the great poet Hafiz. He was not successful in his campaign against Kamrup.

Under Ghiyas-ud-din links were established between Bengal and China. He sent an embassy to the court of the Ming emperor of China, Yang-Lo. Later, an embassy of the Chinese emperor came to Bengal by sea. A Chinese scholar named Ma-Huan has given us many details about Bengal of that age. It appears that the Bengali women of those times wore silken garments and *saris*. The arts of music and dancing rose to great heights. The riches, the liberal outlook and the craftsmanship of Bengal deeply impressed the Chinese writers of that age.

After the death of Ghiyas-ud-din, Raja Ganesh, a Brahmin zamindar of Bhaturia in Dinajpur, taking advantage of the weakness of Ghiyas-ud-din's successors, occupied the throne of Bengal. The Muslim nobles, however, could not reconcile themselves to Hindu rule. Perhaps instigated by them, and at the request of the Muslim saint Qutb-ul-Alam the Sultan of Jaunpur, Ibrabim Shah, attacked Bengal. Ganesh saved himself by paying money and promising to convert his son Jadu to Islam and place him on the throne. After keeping his promise, Ganesh tried to bring Jadu back to the fold of Hindu society by making him perform penances. But the dogmatism of the Hindus of that period stood in his way. Ganesh was an able ruler and earned the respect of his Muslim subjects. Coins of a contemporary king, Danujmardan, have been found. Some historians identify him with Ganesh.

After the death of Ganesh, Jadu ascended the throne and came to be known as Jalal-ud-din. The whole of Bengal—as far as Chittagong in the south-east—was under his rule. After his death the Ilyas Shabi dynasty staged a come-back. In the second half of the 15th century A. D. the Abyssinian slaves became very active as a result of the weakness of the rulers. Bengal was reduced to a state of anarchy through their oppression.

Husain Shah (1483-1519 A.D.) occupied the throne with the help of the leading men of the period, crushed the Abyssinians and restored peace and order in Bengal. Husain Shah was an Arab by birth and had his ancestral home in the village of Chandpara in

Murshidabad. By concluding a treaty with the Sultan of Delhi, Sikandar Lodi, he extended his authority over North Bihar. He invaded Kamrup and Orissa, but the extent of his conquests in these two states cannot be ascertained for certain. He also



Kadam Rasul (Gaur)

clashed with the rulers of Tripura and Arakan. His sway was firmly established from North Bihar to Chittagong and Sylhet. He was a popular and able ruler. Husain Shah appointed many Hindus to high posts. Of these, Purandar Khan or Gopinath Basu and the famous Vaishnavas, Rupa and Sanatan, were more prominent. It was during the reign of Husain Shah that Sri Chaitanya (1485-1534 A. D.), the founder of the Gaudiya Vaishnava faith, made his impact on Bengal. The reign of Husain Shah forms a particularly glorious chapter in the history of Bengal's age of glory.

Bengal. Under the patronage of Paragal Khan, the governor of Chittagong, the poet Parmesvara translated parts of the Mahabharata in Bengali verse. Vijayagupta of Barisal composed the *Padma-purana*. Maladhar Basu, the poet, was given the title of "Gunaraja Khan" by Husain Shah.

Nusrat Shah (1519-1532 A. D.), son of Husain Shah, occupied Tirhut or North Bihar. He had diplomatic relations with the Mughal Emperors, Babur and Humayun, and the Sultan of Gujarat, Bahadur Shah. He clashed with the Ahoms of Assam. The Portuguese appeared in Bengal in his time. Nusrat Shah was a patron of art and literature. He built two famous mosques, Bada Sona and Kadam Rasul, at Gaur. He was an admirer of Bengali literature. The Mahabharata was translated into Bengali at his instruction.

Sher Shah occupied Gaur, defeating Ghiyas-ud-din Mahmud Shah (1533-1538 A.D.), son of Nusrat Shah. When the dynasty of Sher Shah came to an end, the Afghan Kararanis established their power in Bengal. Sulaiman Khan Kararani recognised the suzerainty of Akbar, the Mughal Emperor, only formally. In actual practice he ruled independently. His general, notorious under his designation 'Kalapahar', destroyed many temples in Orissa and Assam. After the death of Sulaiman his son, Daud Khan, was defeated and killed by Akbar in 1576 A.D. Bengal then came under the Mughals.

Bahmani Kingdom : Mention has already been made of the revolt of foreign Muslim nobles in the Deccan in the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq. One of the more important leaders of this revolt, Hasan or Zafar Khan, declared independence and set up a new Muslim kingdom in the Deccan. Hasan claimed descent from the hero of Persian history, Bahman. That is why his dynasty is known as the 'Bahmani'. There is a tradition that Hasan had connections with a Brahmin astrologer named Gangu and that it was in gratitude to him that Hasan's dynasty came to be known as the 'Bahmani' dynasty. This tradition does not seem to have any historical basis. Hasan ruled under the name of Ala-ud-din

Bahman Shah. Fourteen rulers of the dynasty ruled over a vast and flourishing kingdom for a long period. They carried on a prolonged struggle with the neighbouring kingdom of Vijayanagar.



As Firuz Shah Tughluq showed no desire to attempt a recovery of the Deccan, it was possible for Hasan to devote his

attention to consolidation and extension of his newly founded kingdom. He occupied Goa, Dabhol, Kolhapur and Telingana.

Hasan's
conquests

His attempts at conquest of Malwa and Gujarat failed. At his death (1358 A.D.) the Bahmani

Kingdom extended from Daulatabad in the west to Bhongir (in Andhra Pradesh) in the east and from the river Wainganga in the north to the river Krishna in the south. This extensive kingdom was divided into four *tarafs* or provinces. Gulbarga was the capital.

During the reign of Hasan's successor, Muhammad Shah I (1358-1377 A.D.), the long struggle between the Bahmanis and the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar began. The king of Vijayanagar, Bukka I, was defeated in the battle of Kanthal (1367 A.D.) and the victorious Muslim army massacred four hundred

Struggle with
Vijayanagar and
Warangal

thousand Hindus. Kanhayya, the king of

Warangal, was also defeated and had to submit to Muhammad Shah and cede Golkonda. The

next Bahmani ruler, Mujahid, did not achieve any success against Vijayanagar. The struggle for the mastery of the fertile Raichur Doab (the region lying between the Krishna and the Tungabhadra rivers) continued.

Firuz Shah (1397-1422 A.D.) was the greatest of the Bahmanis. He scored success twice against Vijayanagar and a princess of that kingdom had to be sent to his *harem* in accordance with the terms of the treaty. But in his third attempt, Firuz Shah was defeated and the southern and eastern regions of the Bahmani kingdom were occupied by the victorious army of Vijayanagar. Firuz's relations with the Muslim rulers of Khandesh, Gujarat and Malwa were not at all happy. He was an able ruler and devoted to the fine arts. He built many fine palaces in his capital, Gulbarga. During his reign various products from Europe used to be imported into the Bahmani kingdom.

The next Sultan, Ahmad Shah (1422-1435 A.D.), transferred the capital from Gulbarga to Bidar. He occupied the Hindu kingdom of Warangal and came into conflict with the rulers of Malwa and Gujarat. Ahmad Shah's army devastated the

kingdom of Vijayanagar and laid siege on the capital city. The king, Deva Raya II, was forced to pay tribute and conclude a treaty. He was again defeated by Sultan Ala-ud-din Ahmad (1436-1457 A.D.). This time Vijayanagar had to agree to pay tribute regularly.

In the second half of the 15th century the Bahmani kingdom became weak as a result of internal struggles. The worthless Sultans became the playthings of the powerful nobles. The nobles in their turn split up into groups and sub-groups and busied themselves with their respective interests. The Indian and Abyssinian nobles formed a group known as the "Deccanis" and belonged to the Sunni sect. The other side, the "foreigners", were composed of the nobles of Turkish, Iranian and Arab origin. Most of them belonged to the Shia sect. Both sides tried to promote their interests through intrigues, secret murders etc. Nobody bothered about the larger interests of the kingdom.

In these dark days for the Bahmanis a very able minister named Khwaja Mahmud Gawan ruled the kingdom for many years. He was a minister under three successive Sultans and showed great ability in administration and war. He occupied Goa, subdued Konkan and led successful campaigns against Orissa and Telingana. He was, however, executed (1481 A.D.) under orders of Sultan Muhammad III who was misled by the intrigues of the nobles into suspecting Mahmud Gawan of disloyalty.

After the execution of Mahmud Gawan the very existence of the Bahmani Kingdom was at stake. The provincial rulers declared independence and formed four kingdoms known as

Bijapur, Golkonda, Ahmadnagar and Berar.

Fall of Bahmani kingdom The rule of the Bahmanis was limited to Bidar.

In 1526 A.D. Amir Barid, son of the powerful minister Kasim Barid, drove away the last Bahmani Sultan and occupied the throne. Thus another kingdom, Bidar, was added to the four already existing divisions of the former Bahmani kingdom. All these kingdoms were made parts of the Mughal empire in the 17th century.

Though the history of the Bahmanis is full of wars and acts of cruelty, some of them were patrons of art and literature. The forts, palaces and mosques built by them at Gulbarga and Bidar are fine specimens of medieval Indian architecture. They introduced irrigation systems with a view to improving agriculture. Their patronage led to spread of scholarship and education.

The Russian merchant, Athanasius Nikitin, visited the Bahmani Kingdom in the last half of the 15th century. His account shows that the wealth of the country was utilised by a few nobles to live a life of great luxury, while the people in general spent their days in great misery. Exploiting the labour of the peasants the Sultan and the nobles wallowed in luxury.

Five Deccan kingdoms: In 1489-1490 A.D. Yusuf Adil Shah laid the foundation of the kingdom of Bijapur. Of the five kingdoms which arose out of the ruins of the Bahmani state, Bijapur was the most powerful and important.

Ali Adil Shah (1547-1572 A.D.) first joined hands with Vijayanagar and devastated Ahmadnagar. Next he allied with Ahmadnagar and Golkonda and smashed the power of Vijayanagar in the battle of Talikota (1565 A.D.). Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1579-1626 A.D.) conquered Bidar. Bijapur also clashed with Shivaji. In 1686 A.D. Aurangzeb occupied Bijapur and the Adil Shahi dynasty came to an end.

In Telingana, over the ruins of the Hindu kingdom of Warangal, Quli Qutb Shah founded the kingdom of Golkonda. His son, Ibrahim, took part in the battle of Talikota (1565 A.D.), which smashed the power of Vijayanagar, as an ally of Bijapur and Ahmadnagar. In 1687 A.D. Aurangzeb occupied Golkonda the Qutb Shahi dynasty came to an end.

The founder of the kingdom of Ahmadnagar, Ahmad Nizam Shah, was of Hindu origin. He founded the city of Ahmadnagar. Burhan Nizam Shah I (1509-1553 A.D.) fought Bijapur as an ally of Vijayanagar. Hussain Nizam Shah I joined hands with Bijapur and Golkonda in the battle of Talikota (1565 A.D.) which destroyed the power of Vijayanagar. In 1574 A.D. Berar became part of Ahmadnagar. During the reigns of Akbar

Jahangir and Shah Jahan, Ahmadnagar became part of the Mughal empire stage by stage.

The founder of the kingdom of Berar was Fathulla Imad Shah. In 1374 A. D. Berar became part of Ahmadnagar and the Imad Shahi dynasty came to an end.

The kingdom of Bidar was annexed by Bijapur in 1618-1619 A.D. and the Barid Shahi dynasty came to an end.

Model Questions :

1. Trace the history of the independent Sultanate of Bengal.
2. Write short notes on : Ilyas Shah, Ganesh, Husain Shah,
3. Sketch the history of the Bahmani Kingdom.
4. Write notes on: Mahmud Gawan ; Five Sultanates of the Deccan.

CHAPTER 17

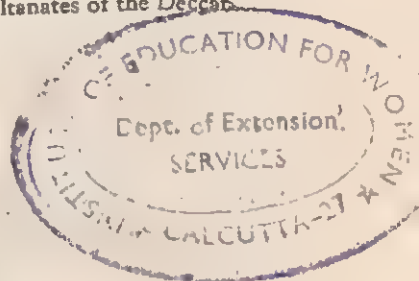
Vijayanagar

Political History : The great kingdom of Vijayanagar in South India was founded in the reign of Muhammad bin Tughluq. Vira Ballala III, the Hoysala king, had probably built a fort at place called Anegundi, south of the river Tungabhadra, in order to resist Muslim invasion. Later, an independent Hindu

kingdom arose round this fort. Some historians

are, however, of the opinion that when Jauna Khan, son of Ghiyas-ud-din Tughluq, devastated the kingdom of Warangal during his father's reign, five sons (Harihara, of Bukka and others) of an individual named Sangama fled from the place and founded the new kingdom of Vijayanagar on the banks of the Tungabhadra (1336 A.D.).

Though historians disagree about the origin of Vijayanagar, all agree that the Sangamas were the first ruling dynasty of this kingdom. Harihara and Bukka extended their dominions from the Tungabhadra in the north to possibly Sangama dynasty Trichinopoly in the South. Sayana, the great commentator on the Vedas, and his brother Madhava, also a



great scholar, were ministers of Bukka. Bukka sent an embassy to China (1374 A.D.)

Perhaps Harihara II, son of Bukka, was the first ruler of Vijayanagar to openly assume the title of 'emperor'. During his reign the prolonged struggle between Vijayanagar and Bahmani Kingdoms began. The object of this struggle was the mastery of the flourishing Raichur Doab, the region lying between the Krishna and Tungabhadra rivers. Though Harihara had to accept defeat at the hands of the Bahmani

Struggle with
Bahmani
Kingdom

Sultan Firuz Shah, he was able to extend his authority over Mysore, Kanara, Trichinopoly, Kanchi and Chingleput. Deva Raya I and Deva Raya II were defeated by the Bahmanis. Deva Raya II recruited many Muslim horsemen and archers in his army in order to strengthen it. Still he was a far-sighted ruler. He introduced reforms in administration and appointed an official to supervise overseas commerce. At this time the empire of Vijayanagar extended as far as the coasts of Ceylon.

Vijayanagar was weakened as a result of internal squabbles and attacks from the Bahmani Kingdom and Purushottam Gajapati of Orissa. The Sangama dynasty fell and Narasimha, chief of Chandragiri, founded the Saluva dynasty (1486 A.D.). During the reign of this dynasty the Bahmani kingdom was split up into five principalities. Vijayanagar continued to be in conflict with these five kingdoms. After the death of Narasimha his general, Narasa Nayaka, became the *de facto* ruler. In 1505 A.D. Vira Narasimha dethroned the weak Saluva king and founded the Tuluva dynasty.

Krishnadeva Raya (1509-1529 A.D.), brother of Vira Narasimha, was the greatest ruler of Vijayanagar. He occupied Raichur Doab (1522 A.D.) and defeated Ismail Adil Shah of Bijapur a few years later when he tried to recover it. Krishnadeva Ray devastated Bijapur and destroyed the fort of Golkonda. He led three successful campaigns against Gajapati Prataprudra, king of Orissa. Such well-protected places in Orissa as Kondabidu,

Tuluva dynasty

Kondapalli etc. fell into his hands and his army advanced as far as Simbachalam (Waltair). The vast empire of Krishnadeva Raya extended as far as Konkani in the west, Waltair in the east and Cape Comorin in the south. Some islands of the Indian ocean also came under his influence. He was on friendly terms with the Portuguese. His achievements were not restricted to the arts of politics and war. He had deep attachment for art, music and literature. As regards religion, he was particularly liberal in outlook. Through his might and good administration Vijayanagar reached the peak of its power, glory and prosperity.

Some years after the death of Krishnadeva Raya, during the reign of Sadasiva Raya, the *de facto* ruler of Vijayanagar was his famous minister, Rama Raya. He allied with the rulers of Bijapur and Golkonda and devastated Ahmadnagar. Later, as a result of his rude behaviour, the Sultans of Bijapur, Golkonda, Ahmadnagar and Bidar combined and attacked Vijayanagar. At the battle of Talikota (1565 A. D.) the army of Vijayanagar was defeated. The victorious Muslims razed the great city of Vijayanagar to the ground. The Sultan of Ahmadnagar killed with his own hand the captive Rama Raya. This battle led to the end of Hindu predominance in South India. Not before the rise of the Marathas could the Hindus of South India again play a dominant role in the sphere of politics.

After the tragic end of Rama Raya, his brother, Tirumala, ascended the throne and founded the Aravidu dynasty. The capital of this dynasty was Penugonda ; it was later transferred to Chandragiri. But Vijayanagar never recovered its old glory. In course of time Chandragiri was reduced to the status of a small vassal state.

Some foreign travellers, who visited Vijayanagar in the days of its prosperity, have left their impressions of it. According to Nicolo Conti, the Italian merchant, the city of Vijayanagar was eight miles in circumference and the king was the most powerful

Fall of Vijayanagar

Foreign travellers

ruler in India. A Muslim envoy, Abdur Razzaq, has stated that the city was well-protected, populous and elegantly decorated. The Portuguese traveller, Paes, has stated that Vijayanagar was the most flourishing city in the world and had more than a hundred thousand dwelling houses.

System of administration: The empire of Vijayanagar mainly rested on military power, for the rulers had to preserve the empire by keeping down the ambitious vassals and fighting against the neighbouring Hindu and Muslim states. But the system of administration was not military in the usual sense. The king exercised the supreme power. His authority was undisputed in administration and judicial affairs, over the armed forces and, indeed, over every sphere. But the kings were not despots. They ruled, advised by able ministers, for the well-being of their subjects. Krishnadeva Raya says, "A crowned king should always rule with an eye towards *Dharma*". The ministers were selected from high castes. Besides the ministers there were many high officials; chief treasurer, superintendent of commerce, superintendent of police, etc. The splendour of the royal court impressed everybody. The aristocracy, priests, scholars, writers, astrologers, musicians etc. flocked to the court in large numbers.

The empire was divided into several provinces. Paes has referred to the provinces as being 200 in number. Perhaps he included the vassal states in his list. The viceroy of a province was known as *Nayaka*. In all matters relating to administration the *Nayakas* exercised great power, but they had to render to the central government accounts of their income and expenditure. The provinces were more or less self-sufficient units of the empire. If the *Nayaka* was oppressive or refused to pay a third of his annual income as central share, the king could dismiss him.

The smallest unit of local self-government was the village. Like the *Panchayats* of North India, there were village assemblies. This village assembly administered the affairs of

the village through its officials. The king kept in touch with the village through an official called *Mahanayakacharya*.

Land revenue was the main source of income. For purposes of taxation, land was divided into three categories according to productive capacity. The royal dues amounted to more than one-sixth of the produce. Besides land revenue, the people had to pay marriage taxes, etc.

The king was the chief justice of the land, though there were numerous courts for the convenience of the people. The convicted received severe penalties. Theft, disloyalty to the king and such other serious crimes were punishable by death.

The army was in charge of the commander-in-chief who had the title *Dandanayaka*. The royal army comprised paid soldiers as well as soldiers sent by the provincial viceroys and the vassals. Along with the infantry and the cavalry, elephants and camels also were used in battle. Artillery was in use. As regards discipline, the troops of Vijayanagar were inferior to those of the neighbouring Muslim kingdoms.

Economic condition : The accounts of the foreign travellers and other evidence prove beyond doubt that Vijayanagar was a flourishing state. There was great improvement in agriculture. Irrigation and drainage systems were well-organised. Textiles and mining flourished. The craftsmen's and merchants' guilds played an important role in the economic system. Vijayanagar was particularly well-known for trade. Abdur Razzaq has stated that there were nearly three hundred ports in different parts of the empire. The most important port on the western coast was Calicut. The islands of the Indian Ocean, Burma, the Malaya Peninsula, China, Arabia, Persia, South Africa, Abyssinia, Portugal — Vijayanagar maintained trade relations with all these places. The chief exports were textiles, rice, iron, sugar etc., while the imports included horses, elephants, pearls, copper, Chinese silk, etc. Ships built in the Maldives were used for carrying cargoes over

the seas. Though the opportunities and the advantages were many, Vijayanagar failed to adopt a really bold policy for expansion of overseas trade. By allowing the Portuguese to establish commercial settlements on the western coast, the kings of Vijayanagar unwittingly laid the basis for much future trouble in the political and economic spheres.

Art and Culture : Had the Hindu kingdom of Vijayanagar not been founded, Muslim influence in South India would have been more far-reaching. In fact, by fighting for a long time against the Muslims in defence of Hindu religion and culture in South India, the rulers of Vijayanagar served a great historical mission. But this vast Hindu empire never oppressed followers of other religions. The Portuguese traveller, Barbosa, says, "The king allows such freedom that every man may come and go and live according to his own creed without suffering any annoyance, and without enquiry, whether he is Christian, Jew, or Hindu".

The rulers of Vijayanagar not only patronized the Sanskrit language, but also encouraged such regional languages as Telugu, Tamil, Kanarese, etc. Sayana, who occupied a prominent place in Sanskrit studies during the medieval period and was a great commentator on the Vedas, and his brother

Literature Madhava were associated with the royal court of Vijayanagar. Krishnadeva Raya himself was the author of several Sanskrit and Telugu works. His court poet, Peddan, was a well-known Telugu literary figure. Besides Peddan, some other Telugu poets enjoyed the patronage of Krishnadeva Raya. The kings of the Aravidu dynasty also were patrons of Telugu literature. Music, Drama, Grammar, Logic, Philosophy—important books were written in Vijayanagar on all these and other subjects.

Architecture rose to great heights in Vijayanagar. The vast temples built by the rulers attest to their devotion to religion as also their love of art. Western authorities on the subject have described these temples as perfect specimens of Hindu architecture. The

temple of Vishnu is supported by numerous ornamental columns. In this connection the temple of Haja built at the time of Krishnadeva Raya deserves particular mention. The art of painting also flourished. The ruins of Vijayanagar still excite the wonder and admiration of scholars and artists.

Model Questions :

1. Sketch the political history of Vijayanagar Empire.
2. Describe the administration and economic condition of the Vijayanagar Empire.

CHAPTER 18

Society and Culture under the Sultanate

Fusion of Hindu and Muslim Cultures : From the ancient times foreign invaders like the Persians, Greeks, Sakas, Huns etc. have established their rule over various parts of the country after defeating the sons of the soil. The wonder is that all these invaders have in course of time taken to the language, religion and social customs of the Hindus and been absorbed into the Hindu society. It is, therefore, impossible to find out who among the present-day Hindus are descendants of these foreign races. But the Muslim invaders have not become a part of the Hindu society ; they have not only kept their separate existence but absorbed those Hindus who embraced Islam for one reason or another and thus went out of the orbit of the Hindu society. Herein lies the main difference between the Muslim and all other previous invasions.

Peculiarity of Muslim invasions

The principal cause of this difference was the fact that the Muslims have always been very conscious of Islam as a faith and of the culture rooted in that religion. There is a fundamental difference between Islam and Hinduism, which is based on worship of images. The Muslims regarded the Hindus as *Kafirs*. In the Islamic State the Hindus were known as

Zimmis (i.e. people living under guarantees) and were not entitled to the same rights as the Muslims. This had its reaction on the Hindu society which in its turn gave up its liberal tradition and kept the Muslims at a distance. We find evidence of this narrow outlook of the Hindus in Al-Biruni's work. The liberal approach which had made possible the absorption of the Greeks, Sakas, Huns and other foreigners into the Hindu society vanished due to the impact of Muslim invasions.

When the Muslims became aggressive in their propagation of Islam, the Hindu society was compelled to take various steps in self-defence. Madhavacharya of Dognatism of Hinduism Vijayanagar, Raghunandan of Bengal and such other authorities on Hindu religious and social customs introduced various rigid measures in order to enable Hindu society to defend itself. As a result, the conservative outlook dominated. Hindu society became quite intolerant. Not to speak of accepting Muslims within the Hindu society, even the slightest deviation on the part of any Hindu from the accepted religious and social canons was treated as an unpardonable offence. Such a rigid policy no doubt saved the Hindu society, but only at the cost of its inherent vitality.

In the 13th and 14th centuries the conflict between the Hindus and the Muslims in the sphere of politics spread to that of religion also. This was the inevitable result of the struggle between the conquerors and the conquered. But peoples who have to stay in a country permanently cannot be at loggerheads for ever; the seeds of union sprout even as the conflict goes on. That the Hindu and Muslim cultures were gradually moving towards a common meeting-ground in the first half of the 14th century is proved by the works of the famous poet, Amir Khusrau. His views regarding the religion, culture and society of the Hindus revealed broadmindedness worthy of a poet. He noticed similarities between Hinduism and Islam in certain respects. Long before this, the great Muslim literary figure, Al-Biruni, had already been

(1) Religion

attracted to the doctrine of one God of the Upanishads. As

(2) Society they came to know each other's religion more intimately, the edge of the conflict between the Hindus and the Muslims became increasingly blunter. In the social sphere also, intimate relations grew up between the two communities. Hindu converts brought over to the fold of Islam various customs and practices from their old faith. A considerable number of Muslims took Hindu wives who spread Hindu influence in the family sphere. On the other hand, their very connections with their rulers in many areas of activity exposed the Hindus to Muslim influence as regards dress, manners, etc. Many Hindus learnt the Persian language and were appointed officials under Muslim rulers. Thus the two neighbouring communities came closer to each other.

This gradual fusion of the two communities was not confined to the spheres of religion and social customs. Art, language and literature did not remain unaffected either. Hindu influence is clearly traceable in the Muslim art of the Turkish-Afghan period. In many cases it is the Hindu architects and artists who built and adorned mosques, palaces etc. under

(4) Language directions from the Muslim rulers. Sikandar Lodi caused Sanskrit works to be translated into Persian. Husain Shah, Nasrat Shah and other Muslim rulers of Bengal contributed to the progress of Bengali literature by their encouragement and active patronage. Many Hindus of those times learnt the Persian language. The vocabulary of Bengali, Hindi and other regional languages was enriched by inclusion of Persian words. Urdu, a mixture of the Persian and Hindi languages, was born. The cordial relation which prevailed among the Hindus and the Muslims at the time of Akbar was not due solely to his liberal policy. The ground had already been prepared for it during the 15th century.

In this connection we must mention two Muslim rulers of the medieval period who are noteworthy for their liberal policy. Husain Shah, the independent ruler of Bengal, has

already been referred to. His toleration of Hinduism and patronage of Bengali literature paved the way for communal harmony. Zain-ul-Abedin (1420-1470 A.D.), the independent ruler of Kashmir, ushered in an era of communal amity in the north-western frontier of India. His father Sikandar was intolerant of the Hindus; his oppression forced many Brahmins of Kashmir to leave that kingdom. Zain-ul-Abedin induced them to return to Kashmir with the promise of a liberal policy. He abolished the *Jeziya* imposed on the Hindus and granted full freedom of religion to all communities. Under his patronage the *Mahabharata* and the *Rajatarangini* were translated into Persian and some Arabic and Persian works into Hindi. For his liberal outlook on religion and his concern for the welfare of his subjects he is known as the "Akbar of Kashmir".

Religious reformers of medieval period : In any discussion of the history of the gradual fusion of the Hindu-Muslim cultures the role of the religious reformers, both Hindu and Muslim, must be gratefully acknowledged. Though the doctrines preached by them are outwardly different, in essence they gave expression to one great truth. To them, purity of heart and piety formed the basis of true religion. Man does not attain salvation through religion encumbered with rituals and formalities. The way to salvation lies through love of the Almighty and His creation, man. This simple but touching message struck the hearts of both Hindus and Muslims. As a result, the conquerors and the conquered were on their way to fusion in the broad arena of religion.

Among the Hindu religious reformers in the medieval period Ramananda deserves to be mentioned first. He lived in the 14th century A.D. He was born of Brahmin parentage in the Deccan (at Allahabad according to another view), but he accepted disciples irrespective of caste and religion. One of his great disciples was Kabir. He used to propagate in Hindi the *Bhakti* cult based on the worship of Ram and Sita.

Kabir lived either in the last half of the 14th century or the first half of the 15th century A.D. He was born in a Muslim weaver (or, according to another opinion, a Brahmin) family. His occupation was weaving. He recognised no difference between Hinduism and Islam. His disciples belonged to both communities. Though his message was mainly derived from Hinduism, it had elements of Islam in it. His disciples were known as "Kabirpanthi", i.e. "followers of Kabir". Kabir composed many devotional verses in Hindi. These verses have great spiritual and literary merit.

In the 15th century A.D. the Vaishnava faith assumed a new form in southern and eastern India. The greatest exponent of this faith in South India was a Brahmin named Ballavacharyya. His message was to give up the pleasures of the world and worship Krishna. In Bengal and Orissa Chaitanya propagated the faith. He was born at Nabadwip in 1485 A.D. and died at Puri in 1533 A.D. He earned renown as a scholar earlier in life. After renouncing the world, he lived at Puri for a long time and travelled in South India, Brindaban, Gaur etc. He propagated the message of pure love. Devotion to God and charity towards His creation constitute the essence of this faith. Among the Vaishnavas the caste division was not rigid. Chaitanya had a Muslim disciple who came to be known as *Yavana* Haridas. Prataprudra, the king of Orissa, became a disciple of Chaitanya. During his reign the Vaishnava faith spread in Orissa. Other reformers Sankara Deva spread the Vaishnava faith in Assam. Mira Bai, who belonged to the royal family of Mewar, spread the *Bhakti* cult in Rajputana. Many of her devotional songs are still current. In Maharashtra the *Bhakti* cult was spread by Namdev. He perhaps lived in the first half of the 15th century A. D. He was born in a family of tailors. The essence of his message was that salvation can be attained through love of God; rites and rituals are unnecessary for the purpose. His disciples included Muslims.

Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, was one of the greatest religious reformers of the medieval period. His creed went far to pave the way for a fusion of Hinduism and Islam. He was born among the Khattris of the village of Talwandi in Lahore district in 1469 A. D.

He renounced the world early in life and travelled in different parts of India. He went as far as Mecca and Baghdad with a view to understanding the message of Islam. His disciples are known as 'Sikhs'. Many belonging both to the Hindu and Muslim communities accepted his discipleship. According to him, observance of rites and rituals is not indispensable for a true religious life. He was opposed to renunciation. He believed it possible to attain salvation if one lived an honest worldly life and had reverence for God. He was a believer in One God. During his time Sikhism was considered a branch of Hinduism. Later, the Sikhs gradually became separate from the Hindu community. Nanak died in 1538 A. D.

Just as the messages of the Hindu religious reformers were spreading among the Hindus, the *Sufi* doctrine was similarly increasing its influence among the Muslims. The exponents of this creed did not like the emphasis on dogma and rituals. It was their object to free religion from all dogma and rigidity and to place it on the universally acceptable basis of love of God and man. Their messages are in many respects like those of the Upanishads. Among the exponents of the Sufi creed Nizam-ud-din Auliya of Delhi and Khwaja Muin-ud-din Chishti of Ajmer are more noteworthy.

Two results of the reform movements in religion deserve particular mention. First, the reformers achieved considerable success in their attempt to narrow down the differences between the Hindus and the Muslims. This paved the way for the later liberal policy of Akbar. Secondly, all of them used their respective regional language as the vehicle of their messages. They knew that they never really could reach the masses through Sanskrit, the language of scholars. Thus the regional languages

were enriched through acting as the media of the religious reformers. In Bengal the Vaishnavas built up a considerable literature of devotional songs and verses in the hitherto neglected local dialects. The *Padavalis* composed by the religious reformers of Maharashtra became the basis of Marathi literature. In the Punjab the messages of the Sikh Gurus were consolidated in the *Granth Sahib* (the sacred book of the Sikhs) and a new alphabet, Gurumukhi, was invented.

Art : Delhi, the capital, was naturally the main centre of architecture under the Sultanate. Here the Indo-Saracenic style in architecture originated and developed. The Sultans and the nobles were in favour of following the Saracenic style

so as to keep the influence of Islam intact. But many of the architects were Hindus and accustomed to the Indian style. Again, in

many cases, materials salvaged from destroyed Hindu temples were used in building mosques or palaces. As a result, the Indian style can easily be traced in Muslim architecture. It is this mixed style which is known as Indo-Saracenic.

The Qutb Minar has already been mentioned. This pillar built at the beginning of the Muslim period does not bear any trace of Hindu influence. Its height is not its only remarkable feature. Nothing could be "more exquisite than its rich but

Architecture : Delhi is not its only remarkable feature. Nothing could be "more exquisite than its rich but restrained carvings". The ruins of the city of Siri, built by Ala-ud-din, give us some idea about the military architecture of that period. The major artistic achievements of Ala-ud-din's reign are the *Alai Darwaza* and the tomb of Nizam-ud-din Auliya. The ruins of the city of Tughluqabad, built during the Tughluq period, attest to the splendour and power of the Sultanate. Both Muhammad bin Tughluq and Firuz Tughluq were patrons of art. Muhammad built the fort of Adilabad and the city of Jahanpana. Firuz built the palace-cum-fortress of Firuzabad at Delhi and the city of Jaunpur in U. P. Under the Sayyid and Lodi Sultans the weakness of Delhi prevented it from taking up construction works on a major scale. However, tomb-shrines of this period did exercise

some influence on later Mughal architecture. Sikandar Lodi laid the foundation of Agra.

As the Delhi Sultanate was crumbling, many independent kingdoms sprang up in different parts of it. Many of the rulers of these kingdoms were patrons of art. There were various provincial styles. Among the achievements of the Sultans of Bengal in the field of art, the *Sona masjid*, the

Provincial archi-
tecture

Kadam Rasul masjid and *Dakhil Darwaza* of Gaur and the *Adina masjid* of Pandua (built during the reign of Sikandar Shah) deserve particular mention. The architects of Bengal used bricks for want of stones. Bengal had its own architectural style.

The Sultans of Gujarat and Malwa built many beautiful palaces, mosques, etc. Ahmadabad, the capital of Gujarat, and Mandu, the capital of Malwa, were well-known for varied artistic treasures. The architects of Gujarat made extensive use of materials from demolished Jain temples and as such, the Indian influence is quite distinct there. *Jami Masjid* of Ahmadabad is a unique specimen of architecture. The *Jami Masjid* and the *Hindola Mahal* (the hall which served as the royal court) have elicited the unstinted admiration of art-lovers. Another prominent centre of Islamic art in North India was Jaunpur. Here the style of architecture reveals distinct Hindu influence. The *Atala Masjid* of Jaunpur is a famous work of art. The Bahmani rulers of South India built many palaces and mosques. Later, the Sultans of Bijapur, Golkonda and other places followed their style. The fort of Daulatabad is almost without equal in skill of construction and impregnability.

The Hindu kings of the medieval period have also left examples of their love of art. Rana Kumbha of Mewar set up a grand pillar of victory in his capital, Chitor. The rulers of Hindu architecture Vijayanagar have drawn the admiration of many foreign travellers by building many palaces, Darbar halls, temples, etc. As Hindu rule at this time was limited to Rajputana and parts of south India, medieval

Hindu artistic works of any note are not found in other parts of India.

Literature : The Persian language spread, and its literature developed, in India as a result of patronage by the Muslim rulers. The greatest literary figure under the Sultanate, Amir Khusrau, was long associated with the Darbar of Delhi. He has to his credit many prose and poetical works. His works have, in addition to literary value, historical importance as in some cases he has made contemporary events the subject-matter of his works. Under the Sultanate Minhaj-ud-din, Barani, Afif and others composed some historical chronicles which are still used as standard historical works for the period.

It has already been mentioned that Urdu, a mixture of the Persian and Hindi languages, originated as a result of intercourse between the Hindu and Muslim communities. This new language paved the way for a sustained dialogue between the conquerors and the conquered. Amir Khusrau's songs and verses in this language built up its literary groundwork.

Though it is the Persian and Urdu languages which mainly enjoyed royal patronage, the languages and literatures of the Hindus of the medieval age did not remain stagnant. Many significant Sanskrit works on religion, philosophy, law etc. belong to this period. In this connection scholars like Ramabaja, Parthasarathi Misra, Jiva Goswami, Vijnanesvara, Jimutavahana, and Vachaspati Misra, deserve particular mention. Towards the close of the age of the Sultanate the spoken languages developed due to popularisation of the *Bhakti* cult through their medium. The Vaishnava literature of Bengal, the works of the Sikhs of the Punjab written in the Gurumukhi script and the poetical works of the Marathi saints may be mentioned in this connection.

Model Question :

1. What do you know about the Sannyasi teachers of the early Muslim period?

2. Write short notes on : Ramananda, Nanak, Chaitanya, Kabir.

3. Give an account of the religious and cultural history of India during the Muslim period down to Akbar.
4. Write what you know about the fusion of Hindu and Muslim cultures in the pre-Mughal period.

CHAPTER 19

Babur, Humayun and Sher Shah

Origin of the 'Mughals': The word 'Mughal' or 'Mogal' is derived from the word 'Mongol'. The original homeland of the Mongols is Mongolia. By his extraordinary qualities in war and organisation, the Mongol chief, Chingiz Khan ('Chingiz' means "extraordinarily powerful"), founded in the 13th century A.D. a vast empire stretching from Siberia in the north to Georgia in the south and from China in the east to Russia on the west. After his death his vast empire split up into several parts. His second son, Chaghatai, received Central Asia as his share. Chaghatai's descendants also ruled over Central Asia. Later the Chaghatai domains were divided into two parts. In the western part there was a mixture of the Tartars and the Mongols although the Tartars were in a majority. It is to this Tartar-Mongol admixture that Timur owed his ancestry.

Babur: The blood of two of the greatest conquerors in Asia flowed through the veins of Babur. He was descended from
 Ancestry Timur on his father's side and from Chingiz Khan on his mother's side. Though he belonged to the Chaghatai branch of the Turks, the dynasty founded by him in India is known as 'Mughal'.

Umar Shaikh Mirza, father of Zahir-ud-din Muhammad Babur, ruled over the small kingdom of Farghana in Central Asia. Babur was born in 1483 A.D. He lost his father when he was only fourteen. As the ruler of Farghana, he conquered
 Early life Samargand, the capital of Timur, at that tender age. However, within a short time Babur lost Samargand and Farghana to the Uzbeks. The

young man without any kingdom did not, however, lose faith in himself. He occupied Kabul in 1504 A.D. Next he tried to recover Samargand with the help of the Shah of Persia. But this attempt ended in failure. His chances of dominating Central Asia vanished in 1512 A.D. He, however, occupied Kandahar in 1521 A.D.

Babur had already been attracted to India. The story of its untold riches stimulated his valiant heart and fired his imagination. He used to think that as a descendant of Timur he had a right to the throne of Delhi. All Indian campaigns he had a right to the throne of Delhi. All glory had by that time vanished from Delhi. During the reign of Ibrahim Lodi, his arrogance and other reasons combined to make the internal condition of the Afghan empire very wretched. Seizing this opportunity, Babur attacked India thrice (1519 A.D., 1520 A.D., 1524 A.D.). The object of the first two campaigns was the subjugation of the tribal areas on the frontier. In his third campaign he crossed the Khyber pass, entered the Punjab and devastated Dipalpur. But he had to return to Kabul from Lahore. He was hoping that two discontented nobles under the Lodis, Daulat Khan Lodi and Alam Khan Lodi, would come to his assistance out of their enmity to Ibrahim Lodi. Had Babur been interested only in plunder like Timur, perhaps they would have joined him. But they were not prepared to help Babur establish Mughal rule in Delhi in place of Afghan rule. Babur, on the other hand, was interested in dealing a final blow to the tottering Sultanate. He had no fascination for Timur's policy of plunder.



Babur

In 1525 A.D. Babur again appeared in India at the head of a twelve-thousand-strong army. In the Punjab Daulat Khan Lodi was defeated and submitted to him after defeat. He fought with Ibrahim Lodi at Panipat on his way to Delhi (1526 A.D.). Ibrahim Lodi was defeated and killed. This memorable event is known as the first battle of Panipat. This battle has left a permanent impress on Indian history, for it was this victory that enabled Babur to lay the foundation of Mughal rule in India.

Babur was not a plunderer like Timur. His object was to establish a permanent empire in India. After his victory at Panipat he occupied Delhi and Agra. His eldest son, Humayun, advanced eastwards with an army and drove away the Afghan nobles. Mughal authority extended as far as Bihar. Multan and Gwalior were also occupied. Within a very short period Babur became the ruler of a large kingdom in India.

When Babur turned his attention to empire-building, he clashed with Rana Sangram Singh of Mewar. Sangram Singh was a powerful king. He gave ample evidence of his power by his repeated encounters with the Sultans of Malwa, Gujarat and Delhi. A large part of Rajputana was under his authority.

Encouraged perhaps by the weakness of the Lodis of Delhi, he was eager to establish a Hindu empire in North India. Naturally he could not reconcile himself to Babur's empire-building designs. The Mughals and the Rajputs fought it out. In 1527 A.D. Babur defeated Sangram Singh at the battle of Khanua near Agra. This blasted all hopes of a Rajput empire in North India. In western India also, there remained no serious challenge to Babur's power. The famous fort of Chanderi in Malwa fell into his hands.

At this time the Afghan nobles in eastern India made a stand against Babur. Babur advanced rapidly eastwards, occupied Bihar and crushed the Afghans at a battle on the banks of the river Gogra (1522 A.D.). The Sultan of Bengal, Nusrat Shah, was compelled to sign a treaty.

Babur died in 1530 A. D. He ruled in India for only four years (1526-1530 A. D.). Warfare demanded all of his time. By force of arms he founded an empire stretching from the river Oxus to Bihar. However, time did not give him the opportunity of devising an efficient administrative system for

Achievements his newly founded empire. From his very boyhood he showed extraordinary martial qualities. His patience, self-reliance, perseverance and other virtues excite our wonder and admiration. He did not lose self-control even in the greatest hour of danger. Patiently thinking with a cool brain, and depending on his extraordinary courage, he found out the ways and means to free himself from such danger. This valiant warrior had, at the same time, a very tender heart. He was a worshipper of the beautiful : he was devoted to music and literature. He himself composed many verses in Persian. His autobiography, written in Turki, is a work of great literary merit. Noticing the combination of paradoxical qualities in his character, an English historian, Lane Poole, has described him as the "link between Central Asia and India, between predatory hordes and imperial government, between Tamerlane and Akbar".

The importance of Babur's autobiography as a source of historical materials for Central Asia and India can hardly be exaggerated. It is no less remarkable for its literary value. As an English historian puts it, "His memoirs contain a minute account of the life of a great Tartar monarch, along with a natural effusion of his opinions and feelings, free from disguise and reserve and no less free from the affection of extreme frankness and candour. The style is plain and manly as well as lively and picturesque and it presents his countrymen and contemporaries in their appearance, manners, pursuits and actions as clearly as in a mirror. In this respect it is almost the only specimen of real history in Asia—he gives the figure, dress, tastes and habits of each individual and describes the countries, the climate, scenery, production, works of art and industry. But the great charm of the work is in the character of the author. It is a relief in the

midst of the pompous coldness of Asiatic history to find a king who can weep for days and tell us that he wept for the playmate of his boyhood."

Humayun (1530-1539, 1555-1556 A.D.): Babur had four sons—Humayun, Kamran, Hindal and Askari. The eldest, Humayun, ascended the throne on the death of Babur. Kamran took possession of Kabul, Kandahar and the Punjab. Hindal and Askari got Mewat and Sambhal (two districts in the Punjab) respectively. Kamran's relations with his brothers were not at all good. Even in the darkest days of Humayun, Kamran was against him. As a result of the division of the kingdom left by Babur, Humayun was placed in great difficulty from the military angle. Babur used to recruit soldiers for his army from Central Asia and Afghanistan. The possession of Kabul, Kandahar and the Punjab by Kamran blocked this avenue of recruitment and made it difficult for Humayun to recruit new soldiers for his army.

A strong, stern ruler was the need of the hour, a ruler who would place the newly founded empire on a firm foundation. Babur did not get the time to introduce an efficient administration in the newly conquered territories of India. The Mughal empire was not yet a cohesive unit. The army was not yet united by any common bond of race or ideal. The recruits from Central Asia and Afghanistan belonged to a variety of races and joined Babur's army only for pay and greed for plunder. In eastern India the Afghans were not yet a spent force. Indeed, they had found a new leader in Sher Khan. In western India independent Gujarat was a rival of Delhi in riches and military power. Humayun had not the strength of mind to tackle all these difficult issues.

Within a short period of coming to the throne Humayun attacked Kalanjar. He extracted money from the Hindu king and then proceeded against the Afghans in the east. After firmly establishing Mughal authority over Jaunpur, he attacked Sher Khan's fort, Chunar, in Bihar. Sher Khan made a

pretence of submission. Humayun next turned his attention to Gujarat in western India and advanced with his army against its ruler, Bahadur Shah. By occupying Malwa and

Chitor, Bahadur Shah had made himself unrivalled in western India. As Humayun advanced, Bahadur Shah fled and took shelter

in Diu. Humayun occupied Malwa and Gujarat. After placing Ahmadabad in charge of Askari, Humayun returned to

Agra. Bahadur Shah soon secured the assistance of the Portuguese, fought against the Mughals and recovered Gujarat.

Malwa also went out of Humayun's grip as the result of a local revolt. Thus Humayun's campaign in western India proved

totally barren. Sometime after this, Bahadur Shah lost his life fighting against the Portuguese. But Humayun was then

leading campaigns in Bihar and Bengal and as such could not seize the opportunity which this sudden fall of his powerful

rival in western India created for him.

After this Humayun again marched against Sher Khan. After capturing the fort of Chunar (1538 A. D.) Humayun

advanced towards Bengal and occupied Gaur. While Humayun was in Gaur Sher

Khan laid siege to Banaras and Jaunpur and overran the whole area as far as Kanauij. Humayun then

left Gaur and turned westwards. On the way, at Chausa near Buxar, Humayun was defeated by Sher Khan (1539 A. D.).

It was after his victory in this battle that Sher assumed the title of "Shah". In 1540 A. D. Humayun was again defeated

in the battle of Bilgram. After trying in vain to secure the help of his brothers in the Punjab he fled

Humayun in exile to Sind and sought the assistance of Maldev, the powerful king of Jodhpur in Rajputana. But

Maldev was afraid of Sher Shah and refused to come to the help of Humayun. Humayun then entered Afghanistan, but the

enmity of his brothers soon forced him to flee the country and go to Persia.

With the help of the Persian king Humayun captured Kandahar (1545 A.D.). He next became the ruler of Kabul

after driving out Kamran. Kamran was blinded and sent to Mecca. Askari also went there. Hindal died in battle. Thus the brothers of Humayun no longer posed a danger to him and he began ruling in Kabul. Meanwhile, things in India began to change. Sher Shah died and his dynasty became weak.

Restoration Humayun took advantage of the situation, attacked India and occupied Lahore, Delhi and Agra (1555 A.D.). He again ascended the throne of Delhi. But before he could smash the Afghan challenge finally, he died in an accident (1556 A.D.).

Sher Shah (1539-1545 A.D.): Sher Shah was an Afghan and belonged to the Sur family. His original name was Farid Khan. By killing a tiger (*sher*) with his own hand he got the title of "Sher Khan" from Bahar Khan Lohani, the Sultan of Bihar. Later, he assumed the title of "Shah" after defeating the Mughal emperor, Humayan.

Boyhood He was perhaps born in 1486 (or 1472 A.D.). His father, Hasan Khan Sur, was a *Jagirdar* of Sasaram in Bihar. In his boyhood he lost the affection of his father as a result of his step-mother's intrigues. He studied in Jaunpur for several years and acquired a good knowledge of Arabic and Persian.

After returning to Sasaram from Jaunpur, Sher Shah looked after his father's *Jagir* for a few years. This experience later proved helpful to him as an administrator. Then his step-mother again turned his father against him by her intrigues. Sher went to Agra and entered service under the Lodis. After the death of his father he returned to Sasaram and took charge of the *Jagir*. In 1522 A.D. he secured service under Bahar Khan Lohani. Within a short period he lost his father's *Jagir* due to the intrigues of his enemies. After the fall of the Lodis at the battle of Panipat, he entered service in 1527 A.D. under Babur, through whose favour he got back his father's *Jagir*. After some time he again returned to Bihar and became the guardian of Sultan Jalal Khan, the minor son of Bahar Khan. Sher Shah became the real ruler as the guardian of Jalal Khan. In 1530 A.D. he increased

his power by capturing the fort of Chunar. The Afghan nobles became jealous of his power and with the assistance of Sultan Ghiyas-ud-din Mahmud Shah of Bengal rose against him. In 1534 A.D. Sher Shah defeated the combined army of the Afghan chiefs and Mahmud Shah at the battle of Surajgarh on the banks of the Kiul river. Thus he became the unrivalled ruler of Bihar. Three years later he captured Gaur, the capital of Bengal, and seized a huge quantity of money (1538 A.D.). There was no longer anybody in eastern India to challenge his authority.

Sher Shah's rise to power had already attracted the attention of Humayun. After his occupation of the fort of Chunar, Humayun attacked the fort (1531 A.D.). The wily Sher Shah saved the situation by feigning submission to Humayun. When, in 1537 A.D., Humayun heard the news of Sher Shah's campaign in Bengal, he could not naturally keep quiet. In 1538 A.D. he came to Bihar and attacked Chunar. Sher Shah avoided a direct clash with him and captured the fort of Rohtas through trickery. Gaur, the capital of Bengal, also fell to him. Ghiyas-

Clashes with
Humayun

ud-din Mahmud Shah, the Sultan of Bengal, fled and came to Humayun's camp. Humayun advanced towards Bengal, captured Gaur (1538 A.D.) and spent some months there in luxury and idleness. This time also Sher Shah did not confront him directly, but proceeded westwards. He occupied Banaras and Jaunpur and plundered the area as far as Kanauj. Hearing the news, Humayun left Gaur and turned towards Agra. On the way, at Chausa near Buxar, Sher Shah defeated Humayun (1539 A.D.). Bengal, Bihar and U.P. (Banaras to Jaunpur) came under his rule. He assumed the title of 'Shah' and ascended the throne (1539 A.D.).

Defeat of
Humayun

In 1540 A.D. Humayun made his last attempt to stage a come-back, but was again defeated by Sher Shah at the battle of Bilgram near Kanauj. The newly founded Mughal empire in India came to a temporary end. The Afghans again ruled in Delhi.

After the battle of Bilgram Sher Shah tried to establish himself more firmly in North India. Kamran, Humayun's brother, left him in possession of the Punjab without putting up any fight and retired to Kabul. Sher

Conquests Shah suppressed the spirited Gakkars inhabiting the region lying between the Indus and Jhelum rivers, built a fort at Rohtas and kept fifty thousand soldiers in the Punjab to protect it against any Mughal attack. He then put down a revolt in Bengal, turned westwards and occupied Malwa (1542 A.D.). Such strong forts as Gwalior, Ranthambhor and Raisin fell into his hands. While capturing Raisin, the Rajput chief of the fort, Puran Mal, was killed along with his whole family though Sher Shah had promised that he and his family would be allowed to leave the fort safely. This atrocious act has put a slur on Sher Shah's name. In 1544 A.D. Sher Shah was placed in a difficult position while attacking Marwar in Rajputana, then ruled by the powerful king Maldev. Sher Shah won only by foul play. His authority was established from Ajmer to Abu. He had no desire to establish Afghan rule in the Punjab. He only wanted to keep the main forts under his control so as to make the Afghan empire in North India secure. After his partial success in Rajputana he advanced towards Central India. While attacking the fort of Kalanjar in Bundelkhand, he died as the result of accidental fire caused by an explosion (1545 A.D.).

Sher Shah was a many-sided genius. Though born the son of a petty *Jagirdar*, he ultimately became the ruler of a vast empire, stretching from Bengal to the Punjab, by means of his extraordinary qualities. In course of only a few years he succeeded in destroying Mughal, and re-establishing Afghan, rule over North India. In this difficult task he did not get the united backing of the Afghans. On the contrary, he had to overcome the stiff opposition of the

Achievements Lohani clan in his task of empire-building. He distinguished himself not only in war but also in administration. Akbar's administrative system was based on the reforms introduced by Sher Shah. Among the Muslim rulers

Sher Shah was the first to treat the Hindus on an equal footing with Muslims. In these matters Akbar inherited his liberal policy. Of course, to serve his end he sometimes resorted to foul play. Still, there is no doubt that he occupies a very high place among the Muslim rulers of India. An English historian has justly remarked that had Sher Shah not died a premature death, the Mughal empire would not have been re-established in India.

Sher Shah was well-educated and devoted to the arts. He built a famous fort in Delhi named "Purana Qilla".
 Art Its ruins still exist. His mausoleum at

Sasaram is a very fine architectural specimen of the Muslim period. "Its pyramidal dome, the silhouette



Sher Shah's tomb (Sasaram)

of which seen at sunset is something to be remembered
India boasts of several mausoleums of more than

ordinary splendour, but Sher Shah's island tomb at Sasaram, grey and brooding, is perhaps the most impressive of them all."

Sher Shah's administrative system : Sher Shah's reign lasted for only five years and a major part of even this short period was spent in fighting. Still, he was able to introduce peace, order and good administration in his empire. As in the field of battle, so also in the sphere of administrative reforms, Sher Shah proved himself a genius.

Sher Shah's empire was divided into forty-seven *sarkars* (small provinces) and each *sarkar* was again divided into several

parganas. A *pargana* consisted of several villages. The word is still used in revenue documents. Every *pargana* had five officials

—*Amin*, *Shiqdar*, treasurer, and two *Karkuns*, one to write in Hindi and another to write in Persian. To supervise their work, every *Sarkar* had a *Shiqdar-i-Shiqdaran* and a *Munsif-i-Munsifan*. There was a system of transfer of officials so that none could stay in a particular area for a long period and acquire any undue influence. Sher Shah tried to abolish the provincial system of the Sultanate. After the revolt in Bengal was put down, he divided the province into several districts. The officials in charge of these districts were appointed by Sher Shah himself, to whom they were directly responsible.

Sher Shah caused all land to be surveyed, settled the boundary of land allotted to each subject, and fixed the amount of revenue. One-third of the produce of the land had to be given

as royal revenues. The subjects could pay their dues either in kind or in cash. Such officials as *Amin*, *Mukaddam*, *Shiqdar*, *Kanungo*, *Patwari* collected the revenues. In order to make clear the rights and duties of the ruler and the ruled the system of exchanging *Kabuliyat* and *Patta* was introduced. Sher Shah restricted the *Jagir* system, but his successors revived it. Akbar's revenue system was based on the reforms introduced by Sher Shah.

Sher Shah paid particular attention to the administration of justice. He was always careful to ensure that the officials

are not unjust or oppressive. Both the strong and the weak occupied the same position at the bar of Judiciary.

justice. In the *parganas* cases were tried by the *Qazi* and the *Mir-i-Adal* and other cases by the *Amin*. As regards these other cases, the *Munsif-i-Munsifan* was the highest authority in respect of several *parganas*. In the capital the Chief *Qazi* and the *Sadr* delivered justice. At the head of all was the emperor himself. As in the case of other departments, in the sphere of the judiciary also his authority was supreme.

Police The police department, associated with criminal cases, was kept under strict watch. To prevent theft, dacoity etc., Sher Shah entrusted the leading villagers with the duty of maintaining peace and order in their village. This was such a success that a historian of those times has remarked : "The highways were so safe that no watch was necessary even if people, with gold in their possession, slept in the open at night."

Sher Shah also introduced reforms in coinage. He circulated silver coins resembling the modern rupee. To encourage commerce and trade he abolished some taxes. With a view to helping commerce as also to make it possible for the army and the people to move about freely from place to place, he constructed some highways. Of these, the Grand Trunk Road connecting the Punjab and Bengal deserves special mention. For the convenience of wayfarers he built rest-houses at intervals along the highways. Under Sher Shah the postal department was particularly improved and arrangement was made for quick despatch of news. It seems amazing that within the brief compass of only five years he was able to introduce such a variety of reforms in so many spheres.

Various reforms Though devoted to Islam, Sher Shah was never guilty of injustice to, and oppression of, Hindus. He was the first among the Muslim rulers of India to give the concept of a national state its start by his policy of recognising equality of all subjects, irrespective of religion. In this respect Akbar followed his liberal policy and further

Religious policy

broadened its scope. Sher Shah appointed Brahmajit Gaur, a Hindu, one of his generals.

Sher Shah's military organisation : Sher Shah maintained a huge army in order to extend his empire and protect it. Under his direct control there were a 1,50,000-strong cavalry, a 25,000-strong infantry and three hundred elephants. He maintained strict discipline in the armed services. Horses were branded as per the system introduced by Ala-ud-din Khalji. The official archives contained all requisite particulars about the members of the defence services. Large numbers of soldiers were kept posted in the strategically important areas.

Successors of Sher Shah : After the death of Sher Shah his son, Islam Shah, ruled for nine years (1545 A.D.—1554 A.D.). He was a just ruler and paid attention to keeping the empire militarily strong. After his death his minor son was put to death by Muhammad Adil Shah, son of Nizam Khan Sur, brother of Sher Shah, who then occupied the throne. He was idle and left everything in the hands of Himu a Hindu official. Some of the relations of Sher Shah then rose against Adil Shah. Seizing this opportunity, Humayun advanced from Kabul and occupied Delhi and Agra (1555 A.D.). A few months later he died accidentally (1556 A.D.). After the accession of his son, Akbar, Himu was defeated in the second battle of Panipat (1556 A.D.) and the possibility of an Afghan restoration vanished.

Model Questions :

1. Who was the founder of the Mughal Empire in India? Describe his career and give an estimate of his character.
2. Explain the importance of the following date in Indian history—1526.
3. Sketch the rise of Sher Shah to power and write what you know about his achievements as a conqueror and as an administrator.
4. Briefly narrate the history of the Afghan-Mughal contest for supremacy in India during 1526-1556.

CHAPTER 20

Pinnacle of Mughal Glory

Akbar and Bairam Khan : While Humayun was moving through the deserts of Sind after being driven out by Sher Shah, Akbar, his eldest son, was born in a place called Amarkot on the 15th October (in Akbar's boyhood another opinion, the 23rd November), 1542 A.D.

Due to his father's reverses of fortune, Akbar could get no educational training in his boyhood. In 1555 A.D. Humayun recovered the Punjab and placed it formally in charge of Akbar. Soon afterwards Humayun died. Then Bairam Khan, Humayun's trusted general, put the boy Akbar on the throne of Delhi and made himself his guardian (1556 A.D.).

Fall of Sur dynasty : Though Humayun recovered the Punjab, he could not totally destroy the Afghan power. The Afghans were still ruling in different parts of North India. The successors of Sher Shah had not yet given up their attempts to preserve their political power. After the death of Humayun, Himu, the minister of Muhammad Adil Shah, led an army composed of fifty thousand horsemen, one thousand elephants and fifty-one pieces of artillery with a view to capturing Delhi and Agra. At Panipat he was defeated by

Himu

Bairam Khan. Wounded and senseless, Himu was made a prisoner. Though advised to do so by Bairam Khan, Akbar did not order his execution. Then Bairam Khan killed Himu with his own hand. The second battle of Panipat (1556 A.D.) is an epoch-making event in the history of India. Had Bairam Khan not won this battle, the chances of re-establishing the Mughal empire in India would have gone. The Afghans would have regained North India. After the death of Himu the Afghans became weak for lack of an able leader. Within a few years the rulers of the dynasty—Adil Shah and others—lost in different battles. The Afghan hopes in North India were blasted.

Fall of Bairam Khan : While Humayun was living the life of an exile in Persia, his chief adviser was Bairam Khan. After the death of Humayun he became the guardian of Akbar. Defeating Himu in the second battle of Panipat he put the revived Mughal empire on a firm basis. He married the niece of Humayun and thus became connected with the imperial family. But the Sunnis disliked Bairam Khan, who belonged to the Shia sect. His arrogance and tactlessness also increased the number of his enemies at the Mughal court. In 1560 A.D. Akbar wanted to take the reins of government in his own hand and asked Bairam Khan to retire to Mecca. Bairam agreed, but angered by the ill-behaviour of one of his enemies, he suddenly revolted but was defeated and made a prisoner. However, Akbar forgave Bairam and sent him to Mecca. In Gujarat, on his way to Mecca, Bairam was murdered by an Afghan (1561 A.D.).

After this Akbar remained for sometime under the influence of his foster mother, Maham Anaga. Then in 1562 A.D. Akbar himself took over the reins of authority.

Akbar's conquests : Akbar was the real founder of the Mughal empire in India. The empire which Babur established had gone to pieces as a result of the weakness of Humayun. Sher Shah had established an Afghan empire in North India.

Though Humayun recovered the Punjab, Delhi and Agra ten years after the death of Sher Shah, it was Akbar who transformed this small kingdom into a vast empire by force of arms and a wise policy. His political genius united India under his rule. He said, "A monarch should be ever intent on conquests, otherwise his neighbours rise in arms against him". In the opinion of an English historian, Akbar was "a strong and stout annexationist before whose sun the modest star of Lord Dalhousie pales". In so far as annexation is concerned, Akbar no doubt excelled Lord Dalhousie.

After the second battle of Panipat Bairam Khan initiated

Achievements of
Akbar

the policy of conquest. Between 1556 A.D. and 1559 A.D. he conquered Ajmer, Gwalior and Jaunpur. As a result of this, Akbar's authority was firmly established in the regions surrounding Delhi and Agra. After the dismissal of Bairam Khan, Akbar's generals conquered Malwa (1561 A.D.). A few years after this, Baz Bahadur, the fallen Sultan of Malwa, submitted to Akbar.

In the Gondwana region of Central India there was a small Hindu kingdom named Garh Katanga. Rani Durgavati used to govern here on behalf of her minor son, Bir Narayan. In 1564 A.D. Asaf Khan, Akbar's general, attacked this kingdom. Knowing that defeat was certain, Rani Durgavati committed suicide; Bir Narayan died in the field of battle. The kingdom was annexed to Akbar's dominions.

Akbar was casting ambitious glances towards Rajputana since the conquest of Malwa. In 1562 A.D. Bihari Mal, the Rajput ruler of Ambar (Jaipur), submitted and gave his daughter in marriage to Akbar. Thus, one of the Rajput States recognised Akbar's authority without putting up any resistance. Bihari Mal was given a command of five thousand. His son, Bhagwan Das, and grandson, Man Singh, rendered great services to the Mughal empire by their performances in battle-field as well as in administration. The family connection with the Mughal empire and the backing of the royal court of Delhi made the small and little-known state of Ambar one of the principal Rajput kingdoms. Some other Rajput kingdoms—Jodhpur, Bundi, Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Sirohi etc.—followed the example of Ambar and submitted to Akbar without any fight. Many Rajput chiefs sent their daughters to the Mughal harem as brides. A third of the Mughal cavalry was recruited in Rajputana.

Akbar never interfered with the religious practices of the Rajputs, nor did he intervene in the internal affairs of the Rajput States. His liberal policy made the Rajputs the best

ally of the Mughal empire. In his policy towards the Rajputs Akbar revealed his political genius as its best. Tod, the chronicler of the Rajputs, describes Akbar as "the first successful conqueror of Rajput independence; to this end his virtues were powerful auxiliaries, as by his skill in the analysis of mind and its readiest stimulant to action, he was enabled to guild the chains with which he bound them". What Ala-ud-din and Sher Shah could not achieve through military power, Akbar achieved with his chain of gold.

Akbar's liberal policy failed only in the case of Mewar.

Mewar The Ranas of Mewar never submitted to him. They were not prepared to sacrifice freedom and give their daughters in marriage to the Muslims. Akbar tried to force them to submission, but never succeeded.

In 1568 A.D. Akbar captured Chitor, the capital of Mewar. The then Rana of Mewar was Udai Singh, a son of Sangram Singh. Chitor had before this fallen to Ala-ud-din Khalji and Bahadur Shah, the Sultan of Gujarat. Thus its capture by Akbar was no extraordinary military feat. Moreover though he conquered Chitor, Akbar could not establish his authority over the whole of Mewar. Udai Singh founded a new capital, Udaipur, and continued to rule there.

After the death of Udai Singh, his son Pratap Singh carried on the fight against Akbar for nearly twenty-five years (1572-1597 A.D.). In 1576 A.D. he was defeated by the Mughal army at the battle of Gogunda or Haldighat. In this battle the Mughal army was led by Man Singh of Ambar. After this all the strong places of Mewar fell to the Mughals one by one. But

Rana Pratap Singh Pratap Singh established himself in inaccessible mountain regions and continued the fight against the mighty Mughals. The endless clashes over such a long period made the fertile land of Mewar *becharag* or without any light. Tod has remarked, "Single-banded, for a quarter of a century did he (Pratap Singh) withstand the combined efforts of the empire, at one time carrying destruction into the plains, at another flying from rock to rock, feeding his family from the fruits of his native hills".

By his Herculean efforts Pratap Singh recovered all parts of Mewar except Chitor, Ajmer and Mandalgarh from the clutches of the Mughal army before his death.

After the capture of Chitor, Ranthambhor in Rajputana and the fort of Kalanjar in Central India fell to
 (7) Ranthambhor
 (8) Kalanjar Akbar (1569 A.D.).

Akbar occupied Gujarat in 1573 A.D. It was then in a state of anarchy. Muzaffar Shah III was the Sultan, but only in name. He had not the power to subdue the ambitious vassals and nobles. It was one of them who invited Akbar. In 1572 A.D., when Akbar approached Ahmadabad, the capital of Gujarat, Muzaffar Shah left the throne in
 (9) Gujarat exchange for a pension. Akbar then captured Surat and made a treaty with the Portuguese at Cambay in order to ensure a safe passage through the sea for the pilgrims to Mecca. Sometime after this there was a revolt in Gujarat. Akbar again came to Gujarat and put down the revolt with great bravery. This time Gujarat submitted totally. The prosperous province of Gujarat enriched the Mughal empire and brought it in direct contact with the European merchants on the western coast.

After extending his empire as far as the Arabian Sea in the west Akbar turned his attention to Eastern India. The Afghan chief, Sulaiman Kararani, had succeeded the Surs in Bengal in 1564 A.D. He did not have to bear the brunt of Mughal might as he submitted to Akbar without any fight.

His son, Daud Khan, did not, however, follow the example of his father, but declared inde-
 (10) Bengal
 (11) Bihar pendence. In 1574 A.D. Akbar himself led

the Mughal army in an attack against Bihar. After capturing Patna, Akbar entrusted to Munim Khan, his general and to Raja Todar Mal, the task of subduing Bengal. After repeated reverses in the hands of Munim Khan, Daud Khan fled to Orissa, which had been annexed by his father. He entered into a treaty with Munim Khan after his defeat at a place called Tukaroi in the district of Balasore (1575 A.D.). But he renewed the struggle within a few months and was defeated

and killed at the battle of Rajmahal (1576 A.D.). Bengal and Bihar came under Mughal domination. In 1580 A.D. Mughal officials in Bengal and Bihar rose in revolt. The rebels had the backing of Akbar's half-brother, Mirza Muhammad Hakim, the ruler of Kabul. The rebellion was suppressed in 1584 A. D.

It took a very long time to establish Mughal rule firmly in Bengal. Isa Khan (of Dacca-Mymensingh), Kedar Rai (of

Bara Bhuiyas of Bengal

Vikrampur in Dacca district), Kandarpanarayan (of Chandradwip or Bakharganj).

Pratapaditya (of Jessore) fought the Mughals for many years and preserved their independence. These powerful chiefs were supposed to be twelve in number and were known as *Bara Bhuiyas*. It is doubtful if these local chieftains can be regarded as champions of the independence of Bengal.*

In 1585 A. D., after the death of Hakim, Kabul practically came under Akbar's rule. Kashmir, Sind, Baluchistan and Kandahar became parts of Akbar's empire respectively in 1586, 1591 and 1595 A.D. The tribes of the north-west frontier gave him a lot of trouble before he could subdue them. Orissa was annexed in 1592. Thus after campaigning for nearly half a century, the whole of North India except Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan and Assam was brought under Akbar's rule.

Akbar next proceeded to extend the Mughal empire to South India. At this time there were four Muslim (Khandesh, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur, Golkonda) and one Hindu (Vijayanagar) kingdom south of the Vindhya. Akbar made no attempt to establish Mughal authority in the land south of the river Krishna. In 1591 A.D. envoys were sent to the Sultans of Khandesh, Ahmad-

* "A false provincial patriotism has led modern Bengali writers to glorify the Bara Bhuiyas of Bengal as the champions of national independence against foreign invaders. They were nothing of the sort. they were nearly all of them upstarts. These mushroom captains of plundering bands have been likened to the hereditary chieftains of the Sisodia and Rathor clans of Rajputana who fought the Mughals in defence of the homes they had bought with the blood of their ancestors through centuries of struggle."—Sir Jadunath Sarkar, *History of Bengal* (Dacca University), Vol. II, p. 225.

nagar, Bijapur and Golkonda in order to ascertain if they were willing to submit to Delhi peacefully. The Sultan of Khandesh



agreed to submit, but the Sultan of Ahmadnagar refused to give up his independence. In 1595 A.D. the Mughal army besieged Ahmadnagar. Chand Bibi, the dowager queen of Bijapur and sister of the minor Sultan of Ahmadnagar, put up a valiant resistance. In 1596 A.D. a treaty

was concluded. Berar' was ceded to Akbar and the Sultan of Ahmadnagar submitted to him. But Chand Bibi lost her power and was probably murdered as a result of court intrigues. The treaty terms with the Mughals were broken and there was renewal of conflict. In 1600 A.D. the Mughal army captured the city of Ahmadnagar, though they could not occupy the whole kingdom. A Nizam Shahi Sultan continued to rule over a part of it.

Meanwhile, the Sultan of Khandesh had repudiated Akbar's suzerainty and taken shelter in the impregnable fort of Asirgarh.

In 1599 A.D. Akbar captured Burhanpur, the capital of Khandesh, and laid siege to Asirgarh. In 1601 A.D. the fort fell to him. Daniyal, Akbar's son, was made the governor of Khandesh, Berar and Ahmadnagar.

The conquest of Khandesh was the last of Akbar's military exploits. He died on 17th October, 1605 A.D.

Akbar's administration : Akbar was not only a great conqueror ; he was also a great administrator. He consolidated his conquests into an integrated empire through his well-planned administrative measures. For some of these he was indebted to Sher Shah.

The Emperor himself was the active head of the political-cum-administrative structure. He personally dealt with all important matters relating to war and peace, civil administration, important appointments, etc. Sometimes he led his army in war, as Akbar did in the Gujarat and Bengal campaigns. He held three daily meetings for transaction of political and administrative business.

Of the Emperor's Ministers, the *vakil* occupied a position of dignity and status but did not exercise any real power. The *Dewan* was in charge of revenue and finance. The

Ministers *Mir Bakshi* was the head of the military department. The *Mir Saman* was in charge of factories and stores. The *Sadr-us-Sadr* was the head of the ecclesiastical and judicial departments. Two secretaries of the Emperor (the *Daroga-i-Ghusal Khana* and the *Arz-i-Mukarrar*) occupied important positions.

Akbar's bureaucracy was organised on military lines. The superior officers were divided into 33 grades ranging from *Mansabdars* of 10,000 to *Mansabdars* of 10. Those who held *mansabs* of over 200 were called *Amirs*. The *Mansabdars* had high salaries.

Akbar had a small standing army which did not probably exceed 25,000. The greater part of the army consisted of contingents provided by the *Mansabdars*. Troops paid by the Government but placed under the command of *Mansabdars* were called *Dakhili*.

Akbar's revenue system was evolved through several experiments. The reforms introduced by Todar Mal left a permanent impression on Indian history. There were three methods of assessment and collection of revenue: (1) In the north-west a share of each crop was taken by the State. (2) In the vast area from Gujarat to Bihar cash rates were fixed in place of share of the produce. (3) In Bengal the system resembled zamindari settlement.

The Empire was divided into 15 *Subahs* or provinces. In each of the *Subahs* the head of the executive was the *Subahdar* (or *Sipah-salar* or *Nazim*). The revenue department and civil justice were in charge of the *Dewan*; he served as a check on the *Subahdar*. The principal officer in charge of local administration was the *Faujdar*. The Central Government exercised continuous control over the administration of the *Subahs*.

The Emperor as also the *Subahdars* personally heard important cases; the revenue cases were tried by the *Dewans*. Cases involving the Muslim law (*Shariat*) were referred to the *Qazis* and *Muftis* who functioned both at the Centre and in the provinces. Muslim law was applicable to cases of inheritance, marriage etc. among the Muslims as also to criminal cases in general. Regarding inheritance, marriage etc. the Hindus were governed by their own sacred law.

Akbar's religious views : In his early life Akbar was a devout Muslim of the Sunni sect. Then his contact with the liberal views of Shaikh Mubarak and his two sons, Faizi and Abul Fazl, gave him a rational outlook. In 1575 A.D. he built a house of worship at Fathpur



Akbar

Sikri known as *Ibadat Khana*. At first only the Muslim Maulavis had the right of entrance there. Later, its door was opened to scholars and devotees of various religions, such as, the Hindus, Parsis, Jains, Christians, etc. Here discussions and debates were held on different religions. This left a deep impress on Akbar's mind. He was convinced that "there is light in all,

and light with more or less of shade in all, modes of worship"

His understanding of different religions made him propagate a new creed, *Din Ilahi* (1582 A.D.). It has been described as "monotheistic Parsi Hinduism". In actual fact, "it was a Sufi

order of Islam within Islam" and not a new religion at all. Akbar did not compel anybody to embrace *Din Ilahi*. Only a single Hindu, Raja Birbal, became its devotee. This proves that there was no political motive behind the propagation of *Din Ilahi*. Akbar did not make any new approach to Hindu-Muslim unity by bringing both the communities under the bond of a single religion. *Din Ilahi* went out of the picture with his death.

Akbar never renounced Islam. The decrees which he proclaimed did not clash with the fundamental ideas of Islam.

By issuing the Infallibility Decree he claimed to be the final arbiter of all questions concerning Islam (1579 A.D.). The orthodox historian, Badauni, has unjustly charged Akbar with renouncing Islam.

Akbar's Character : There is no doubt that Akbar was the greatest of the Muslim rulers of India. He deserves a high place in world history as an empire-builder. Akbar shone equally in battle and administration. Though uneducated, he revealed unique devotion to literature and religious thought. The arts of architecture and painting during his reign show his refined appreciation of beauty. He drew the sincere respect and admiration of his subjects, irrespective of race or religion. No other monarch of the medieval period was a genius of such versatility as Akbar.



Jahangir

Jahangir (1605-1627 A.D.)

After the death of Akbar his eldest and only surviving son, Salim ascended the throne and assumed the title, "Nuruddin Muhammad Jahangir Padishah Ghazi". Khusrau, the eldest son of Jahangir, revolted unsuccessfully in order to get the throne. He was made a prisoner and blinded.

The Sikh Guru, Arjan, had compiled the famous sacred book

of the Sikhs, *Adi Granth* or *Granth Sahib*, in 1604 A.D., a year before the accession of Jahangir. The Sikhs had increased in number under Arjan and the influence of the Sikh Guru had aroused the suspicion of the Mughal court. Arjan was condemned to death by Jahangir for his supposed disloyalty (1606 A.D.). The liberal policy which Akbar adopted in his treatment of the Sikhs was abandoned by Jahangir. As a result, Jahangir's reign saw the beginning of the struggle between the Sikhs and the Mughals.

Nur Jahan : In 1621 A.D. Jahangir married a beautiful lady named Meher-un-nisa and gave her a new name, Nur Jahan (Light of the World). There was nobody else who exercised such great influence in the Mughal court till the death of Jahangir as Nur Jahan. Her father had come to India from Persia at the time of Akbar and secured a post in the Mughal court. Nur Jahan was married to a *Jagirdar* of Burdwan, Ali Quli Istajlu (Sher Afkan). Sher Afkan was killed by Mughal troops for rising in revolt after Jahangir's accession to the throne. Nur Jahan came to Agra with a daughter. Four years later she was married to the emperor. It is doubtful if there is any historical basis for the widely circulated story that Jahangir wanted to marry Meher-un-nisa before her marriage with Sher Afkan and that Sher Afkan met his death at a hint from Jahangir. Anyhow, after her marriage with the emperor, Nur Jahan became a powerful political force through her intelligent moves. Her name used to be inscribed in coins side by side with that of Jahangir. Her father, Itmad-ud-daula, became the chief minister of Jahangir and her brother, Itqad Khan, secured a high post. The building which Nur Jahan erected over the tomb of Itmad-ud-daula at Agra is a remarkable specimen of Mughal architecture. Towards the close of Jahangir's reign Nur Jahan was the virtual ruler of the empire. No other lady of the Mughal royal family had ever been so great a political force as Nur Jahan.

Conquests : Akbar had extended his authority all over Rajputana and captured Chitor, the capital of Mewar, but the Rana of Mewar, Pratap Singh, had not submitted to him. In

the time of Jahangir, in 1615 A.D., Amar Singh, the then Rana of Mewar, at last submitted to the Mughals. Shahzada Parvez, Mahabat Khan and Abdulla Khan—none of them had been able to reduce Mewar to submission in spite of several campaigns. At last Jahangir placed Prince Khurram in command of the campaign against Mewar. Famine and pestilence devastated the war-ravaged land. Amar Singh saw no alternative but to sign a treaty. The terms of the treaty were quite honourable in the circumstances. Though the Rana of Mewar was bound by the condition of sending



Tomb of Itmad-ud-daula at Agra

soldiers to the emperor's army, he was spared the humiliation of presenting himself at the Mughal court as a token of his submission and sending royal daughters to the Mughal harem. No other Rajput ruler had been able to extract such favourable terms from the Mughals. It cannot be denied that Jahangir was liberal to Mewar.

The fort of Kangra, situated in the mountain regions of north-eastern Punjab, fell in Jahangir's hands in 1620 A.D.

During Jahangir's reign Mughal authority was firmly

established in Bengal. The ruler of Ambar, Man Singh (1594-1606 A.D.), and Islam Khan (1608-1613 A.D.) were for long governors of Bengal. Islam Khan defeated and killed the Afghan chief Osman Khan (1621 A.D.) and put down such local chieftains as Pratapaditya of Jessore, and Musa Khan, the son of Isa Khan. He occupied the eastern portion of Cooch Behar (the western Brahmaputra valley in Assam) and Sylhet and invaded Cachar. Islam Khan transferred the capital to Dacca from Rajmahal.

In the Deccan Jahangir followed Akbar's policy of conquest. A part of Ahmadnagar was gaining in strength under an Abyssinian minister, Malik Ambar. By his unique administrative capacity, wise political moves and martial skill, he succeeded in resisting the Mughals for a long time. In this he had the co-operation of Bijapur and Golkonda. Prince Khurram, a son of Jahangir, defeated Malik Ambar in 1616 A.D. and captured Ahmadnagar and some other forts. For this success Khurram received the title of 'Shah Jahan'. In actual fact, however, Mughal authority in Ahmadnagar was confined to the region annexed by Akbar. Later, when Shah Jahan revolted against his father, Malik Ambar helped him. Malik Ambar died in 1616 A.D. He founded the new capital of the Nizam Shahi dynasty at a place called Kharki (present Aurangabad). His revenue reforms have earned him a place in the history of the Deccan.

Kandahar : Shah Abbas, the greatest of the Safavi rulers of Persia, was a contemporary of Jahangir. Kandahar was then a famous centre of commerce and it had strategic importance too. Shah Abbas was very eager to occupy Kandahar. After posing to be a friend of the Mughals for a long time he captured Kandahar by a surprise attack in 1626 A.D. Jahangir planned an expedition for the recovery of Kandahar, but this came to nothing as a result of Shah Jahan's revolt.

Rebellion : Towards the end of Jahangir's reign Shah Jahan rose against the emperor as a result of the intrigues of Nur Jahan. The daughter of Nur Jahan and Sher Afkan

had been given in marriage to Shahriyar, the youngest son of Jahangir. Nur Jahan was planning to place the weak Shahriyar on the throne after the death of Jahangir and

dominate the show through him. But Shah Jahan was equally ambitious and wanted the imperial crown. Naturally Nur Jahan and Shah Jahan came into conflict. After a struggle for three years (1623-1625 A.D.)

Shah Jahan was defeated and forced to submit to his father. It was Mahabat Khan to whom the credit is principally due for bringing Shah Jahan to submission. But Nur Jahan planned mischief against Mahabat Khan also and thus made him an enemy. Mahabat Khan made Jahangir a prisoner, but Nur Jahan secured his release through a ruse. Then Mahabat Khan went to the Deccan and joined Shah Jahan. Before the issue could be settled finally, Jahangir died (October, 1627 A.D.).

Character : Jahangir was no versatile genius like Akbar. A foreign traveller has stated, "Now for the disposition of the king it ever seemed unto me to be composed of extremes : for sometimes he was cruel and at other times he would seem to be exceedingly fair and gentle". He was addicted to drink and opium. His character lacked firmness and in the last years of his life he had become a mere plaything in the hands of Nur Jahan. Yet Jahangir was not wanting in qualities. He was anxious for the welfare of his subjects. He always tried to ensure that they were not denied justice. He reduced their burden of taxation. Jahangir was especially devoted to arts and literature. He himself painted. His

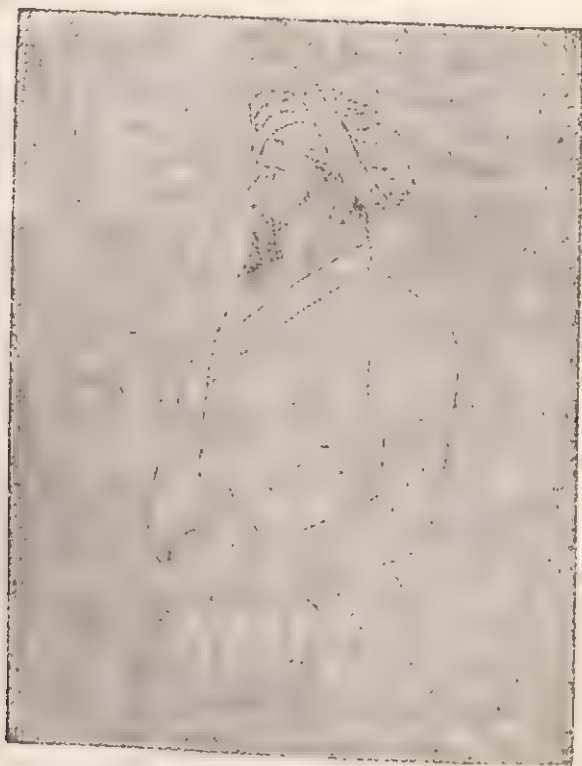
Autobiography autobiography, *Tuzuk-i-Jahangiri*, is a noteworthy specimen of historical literature. In it he has frankly related the main events of his life. Though he was not dogmatic in religious matters, he nonetheless had not the liberal outlook of Akbar. He used to discuss but never adopted any of the practices of Hindu, Parsi or Christian

Religious policy religions. In his cruelty to the Sikh Guru he showed himself rather intolerant of the Sikh religion. We must not, however, forget that the whole question was vitiated

by politics, for Guru Arjan had supported the rebel prince Khusrau.

Shah Jahan (1627-1658 A.D.)

Accession : After the death of Jahangir, Shah Jahan ascended the throne with the assistance of his father-in-law, Asaf Khan. His two elder brothers, Khusrau and Parvez, had already died. The youngest, Shahriyar, was defeated and



Shah Jahan

blinded. As a result, Nur Jahan, who had backed Shahriyar, lost her political influence.

Rebellion : During the first half of Shah Jahan's reign Jhujhar Singh of Bundelkhand and Khan Jahan Lodi, the former governor of the Deccan, rebelled. The Portuguese

revolted in Hughli. They used to charge extremely heavy duties from local merchants and kidnap local children and convert them to Christianity. The Mughal army put down all these revolts. Under orders from Shah Jahan, Qasim Khan occupied Hughli in 1630 A.D. and made captive a large number of the Portuguese.

Extension of empire : During the reign of Shah Jahan there was a long struggle with the Ahoms on the eastern frontier of Bengal and parts of the Brahmaputra valley came under the Mughals. But in so far as conquests are concerned, Shah Jahan's reign saw a far better performance in the Deccan.

During the reign of Jahangir the Mughal army could not destroy entirely the Sultanate of Ahmadnagar due to the valiant resistance put up by Malik Ambar.

Ahmadnagar

After the death of Malik Ambar, Ahmadnagar became weakened as a result of the quarrel between his son, Fath Khan, and the Nizam Shahi Sultan. Fath Khan was bribed by the Mughals and handed over Daulatabad to them. In 1633 A.D., the kingdom of Ahmadnagar ceased to exist. The Mughals annexed it and the last Nizam Shahi Sultan was kept a prisoner at the fort of Gwalior.

After the fall of Ahmadnagar there remained but two independent Muslim kingdoms in the Deccan—Bijapur and Golkonda. The Sultans of these two States had earned the displeasure of the Mughal emperors by assisting the Maratha chief, Shahji, in his attempt to revive the kingdom of Ahmadnagar by putting a boy of the Nizam Shahi dynasty on the throne of a portion of the Nizam Shahi dominions. In 1634 A.D. Shah Jahan himself came to the Deccan.

Bijapur and
Golkonda

Three Mughal armies were ready to invade Bijapur and Golkonda and another to occupy the territories under Shahji. The Sultan of Golkonda submitted to the Mughal emperor without putting up any fight and also agreed to pay an annual tribute of 8 lakhs of rupees (1636 A.D.). The Sultan of Bijapur fought, but lost. He submitted to the Mughal emperor and paid an indemnity of 20 lakhs. He was,

however, spared the humiliation of paying any annual tribute (1636 A.D.). The forts and territories which Shahji had occupied now became parts of the Mughal empire and Bijapur, and as *Jagirdar* of Poona he was reduced to the position of a vassal of Bijapur. All hopes of reviving the kingdom of Ahmadnagar vanished.

Aurangzeb, the third son of Shah Jahan, was then made the viceroy of the Mughal dominions in the Deccan. The new city which Malik Ambar had founded at Kharki was renamed Aurangabad after Aurangzeb. The Mughal territories in the Deccan was at that time divided into four provinces—Khandesh, Berar,

Aurangzeb in the
Deccan

Telingana and Ahmadnagar. Aurangzeb governed these provinces for eight years (1636 A.D.-1644 A.D.). In 1638 A.D. he conquered the kingdom of Baglana, which lay on the way from Gujarat to the Deccan.

In 1652 A.D. Aurangzeb was appointed the viceroy of the Deccan for the second time. During his administration a new revenue system was introduced in the Mughal provinces of the Deccan. This increased the royal revenues, improved agriculture and was, on the whole, advantageous to the people.

But Aurangzeb was not ready to rest on his laurels as a good administrator. He was very eager to occupy Bijapur and Golkonda. He first came into conflict with Golkonda. Aurangzeb complained that the Sultan of Golkonda had not paid tribute in terms of the treaty of 1636 A.D. and that he had sent an expedition to the Karnatak without the prior consent of the Mughal emperor. Meanwhile, bad relations had cropped up between the Sultan of Golkonda and his chief minister, Mir Jumla.

Golkonda
Mir Jumla

The real name of Mir Jumla was Muhammad Sayyid. He had come to India from Persia in search of commerce, which yielded him a vast fortune. He became the chief minister of Golkonda through the patronage of the Sultan. When his relations with the Sultan reached the breaking point, he sought the protection of Aurangzeb, who naturally seized this opportunity and attacked

Golkonda (1656 A.D.). Golkonda was on the verge of fall. Just at this critical juncture Shah Jahan, influenced by his eldest son, Dara, suddenly ordered Aurangzeb to stop the campaign. The Sultan of Golkonda paid Rs. one crore, ceded a part of his kingdom, and entered into a treaty with the Mughals (1656 A.D.). Mir Jumla went to Delhi and became the Prime Minister of the empire.

Aurangzeb next attacked Bijapur. When its fall became imminent, Shah Jahan, again influenced by Dara, commanded Aurangzeb to cry a halt to the campaign. A Bijapur treaty was concluded (1657 A.D.); the Sultan paid Rs. one crore and ceded a part of his territory to the Mughals. Then, on hearing the news of the serious illness of Shah Jahan, Aurangzeb started towards Delhi with a view to seizing the throne.

Shah Jahan had no responsibility for the conflicts with Bijapur and Golkonda. This was not the logical culmination of his policy, but was rather the result of the aggressive policy pursued by Aurangzeb. Though he could not reach his objective during the reign of his father, Aurangzeb was able to put an end to the existence of Bijapur and Golkonda as separate entities when he became emperor.

Shah Jahan failed in his attempts to extend his empire to Central Asia and Afghanistan. The Balkh and Badakhshan regions lying between the Hindukush and the river Oxus were regarded as Mughal heritage left by Babur.

Central Asia. The regions lay on the way to Samargand, the capital of Timur and the scene of so many reverses in Babur's fortune. Taking advantage of the internal difficulties the Mughal army, led by Murad, the fourth son of Shah Jahan, occupied Balkh and Badakhshan (1646 A.D.). But the Mughal nobles, accustomed to a life of ease and luxury, could not face the grim conditions of existence in Central Asia. The Mughal army also failed to subdue the formidable Uzbeks. Within a year of their victory, the Mughals left the newly conquered territories in Central Asia. Four crores of rupees, required for financing the campaign, thus went down the drain.

The Persians had captured Kandahar during the reign of Jahangir. In 1638 A.D., assisted by the treachery of a Persian general, Shah Jahan recovered it. In 1649 A.D. Kandahar again changed hands and fell to the Persians. Later, two campaigns led by prince Aurangzeb (1649, 1652 A.D.) failed to drive out the Persians from Kandahar. A third campaign under prince Dara in 1653 A.D. produced no better result. These three campaigns cost the Mughals Rs. ten crores. The successive failures were a blot on the martial glory of the Mughals and a feather in the cap of Persia. Dark clouds of Persian terror now loomed on the north-western horizon of India. The logical culmination of all this was the invasion of Nadir Shah.

War of Succession : Shah Jahan had four sons : Dara, Shuja, Aurangzeb and Murad. The eldest, Dara, was a great favourite of his father. As the heir to the throne, he always remained near the emperor in the capital. But he had no experience in the arts of war and administration. He could not judge men by the crucial test of danger and difficulty. Moreover, his continued residence in the capital had snapped all his connections with the army in the field. He was learned, dedicated to scholarship and liberal in his religious outlook.

Shah Jahan's four sons
These qualities did not endear him to the orthodox Muslims, many of whom regarded him as a sort of traitor to his religion. Shuja, the second son of Shah Jahan, was the *Subadar* (governor) of Bengal for nearly seventeen years. He was by nature indolent and given to luxury. Aurangzeb, the third son, was firm, efficient, clever, a master in the art of war and a great believer in Islam. He had imbibed varied experiences from the field of battle as well as from the sphere of administration. In order to reach a political objective, he did not hesitate to use any means, fair or foul. He hated Dara from almost his very birth. His unquestioned loyalty to Islam had made him the favourite of the orthodox Muslims. The fourth son of Shah Jahan, Murad, the governor of Gujarat, was rather simple-minded, pleasure-loving and wild.

In September, 1657 A.D., Shah Jahan was critically ill. Dara was then with him at Agra. Shuja was in Bengal, Aurangzeb in the Deccan and Murad in Gujarat. Though Dara was the nominated heir of Shah Jahan, all his brothers were eager to seize the throne. When news reached them that Shah Jahan was lying seriously ill, all of them thought that the emperor was no longer alive and that Dara was hiding the news of his death only to securely occupy the throne. Relying on this guess they advanced with their armies against Dara. Among the daughters of Shah Jahan, Jahanara sided with Dara while Raushanara backed Aurangzeb.

Shuja declared himself as emperor at Rajmahal, the capital of Bengal, and marched towards Agra. Murad similarly declared himself as emperor at Ahmedabad and advanced against Dara. Aurangzeb headed towards Agra from the Deccan with an army and joined Murad on the way. He had already come to an agreement with Murad that they would divide the empire between themselves. Meanwhile, Shah Jahan was on the way to recovery. He and Dara were not sitting idle while the ambitious princes were marching towards Agra. Raja Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur and Qasim Khan led a large army to halt the advance of Aurangzeb and Murad. Sulaiman Shukoh, the son of Dara, and Jai Singh, the ruler of Ambar, marched against Shuja.

In April, 1658 A.D., Jaswant Singh clashed with Aurangzeb at Dharmat near Ujjain and was defeated. After this battle Aurangzeb and Murad marched very rapidly towards Agra.

Defeat of Dara On the way, near Agra, Dara himself was defeated by Aurangzeb at the battle of Samugarh (May, 1658 A.D.). Unable to collect another army, Dara fled to Lahore. Aurangzeb captured Agra and imprisoned Shah Jahan (June, 1658 A.D.). Within a few days he was in Delhi (July, 1658 A.D.). Meanwhile, Murad

Fate of Murad had been made a captive in the Gwalior fort by a ruse. In December, 1661 A.D., he was beheaded.

In 1658 A.D. Shuja had been defeated by Sulaiman Shukoh at the battle of Bahadurpur near Banaras. But after the

defeats of Dara at Dharmat and Samugarh, Sulaiman Shukoh was no longer in a position to continue the fight against Shuja. Shuja seized this opportunity to strengthen his army. After

Defeat and tragic
end of Shuja

occupying Delhi and Agra, Aurangzeb marched against Shuja and defeated him at Khajwa near Allahabad in January, 1659 A.D. Shuja then fled to Bengal, pursued by Aurangzeb's trusted general, Mir Jumla. Shuja failed to collect an army in Bengal and fled to Arakan with his family. In 1661 A.D. he himself and his entire family were murdered under the orders of the ruler of Arakan. Sulaiman Shukoh was made a prisoner and executed in 1662 A.D. under the orders of Aurangzeb.

Dara, who had fled to Lahore, sought shelter successively at Multan, Sind, Gujarat and Rajputana. In Rajputana he did not get the help he expected from Jaswant Singh, the ruler of Jodhpur. In March, 1659 A.D., at a place called Deorai near Ajmer, Aurangzeb again inflicted a defeat on Dara. Dara then prepared to flee to Persia by way of Kandahar, but a treacherous

Fate of Dara

Afghan chief handed him over to Aurangzeb near the Bolan Pass. In August, 1659 A.D.,

Dara was put to death by Aurangzeb on the pretext of disloyalty to Islam.

Shah Jahan died in January, 1666 A.D., after living the life of a captive at the Agra fort for long eight years. His only consolation during this sad chapter of his life was the affectionate nursing of his eldest daughter, Jahanara.

Death of Shah
Jahan

Estimate of Shah Jahan : Shah Jahan had all the virtues and vices common to the monarchs of that age. His ambition in the sphere of politics had made him rise in revolt against his father. In order to make clear his passage to the throne, he killed his elder brother, Khusrau, and other relatives. By showing preference for Dara, he indirectly paved the way for Dara's tragic end. The softer side of his character was revealed in his attitude to his wife Mumtaz Mahal. Shah Jahan built the Taj Mahal in order to make her immortal. Shah Jahan's love of

Personal
character

beauty and patronage of the fine arts have made him famous in history.

As a ruler, Shah Jahan won fame as a dispenser of justice and also for his liberality. Manucci, the Italian traveller, saw with his own eyes the terrible punishment of an official who had taken bribe. According to him, the emperor kept constant and strict watch over his officials and any neglect of duty was punished severely. But the emperor's long hands did not reach the far-away provinces of the empire. The French traveller, Bernier, says that the oppression of the provincial governor "often deprived the peasant and artisan of the necessaries of life." Shah Jahan introduced no fundamental change in administration, though the sorrows and hardships of his subjects moved him. In 1630-1632 A.D. there was a terrible famine in Gujarat and the Deccan. Shah Jahan then tried his best to save the lives of his subjects.

Shah Jahan was not liberal in his religious policy. Oppression was let loose on the Christians on the pretext of suppressing the Portuguese of Hughli. The Hindus were forbidden to build new temples. In the Banaras region 76 newly-built temples were destroyed. The Hindus were again required to pay the pilgrim tax.

Zenith of Mughal power : In the opinion of the famous English historian, Vincent Smith, Shah Jahan's reign was the "climax of the Mughal Empire." Aurangzeb's empire was greater in extent, but the rise of the Marathas had already sapped the base of Mughal power in South India. Except the two revolts (those of Jhujhar Singh and Khan Jahan Lodi) during the first half of his reign Shah Jahan faced no such challenge during the rest of his rule. His authority was undisputed over all parts of the empire. Aurangzeb's reign, on the other hand, was full of revolts. During the reign of Shah Jahan, though the Mughal army did not cover itself with glory in Kandahar and Central Asia, the emperor was supreme in military power within the country. Mughal art reached the peak of its perfection under Shah Jahan. But it is the people who had to bear the expenses of the massive building works.

The royal treasury was full because the tax-payers were continuously drained of their money. According to Smith, the war of succession among the sons of Shah Jahan was the prelude to the fall of the Mughal empire.

Model Questions :

1. Explain the importance of the following date in Indian history—1556.
2. Write a short note on Himu.
3. Give some account of the services rendered to their people by Chand Bibi and Malik Ambar.
4. Write a study of Akbar as soldier, administrator and nation-builder.
5. Trace, with dates, the gradual extension of the Mughal dominions in India during the reign Akbar. Describe with the help of a sketch-map, or otherwise, the extent of Akbar's empire at the time of his death.
6. Mention the steps which led to the conquest of Northern India by Akbar, and characterise his policy towards his Hindu subjects.
7. Discuss the religious measures of Akbar.
8. In what sense may Akbar be regarded as the real founder of the Mughal Empire ?
9. What do you know about the measures adopted by Akbar to conciliate the Hindus ?
10. Why is Akbar regarded as one of the greatest rulers in the world ?
11. Sketch the reign of Jahangir.
12. Write a note on Nur Jahan.
13. In what sense may Shah Jahan's reign be said to mark the climax of the Mughal Empire ?

CHAPTER 21

The Mughals and the Marathas

Aurangzeb (1658-1707 A.D.) : Character : Aurangzeb captured imperial power by imprisoning his father and killing his brothers. His reign lasted nearly fifty years. Under him the Mughal empire reached its zenith in so far as extent is con-

cerned. At the same time, his reign saw the beginning of the fall of the Mughal empire, for which Aurangzeb was not a little responsible. The cruelty which he showed in his greed for the throne has no doubt cast a slur on his name. However, such cruel treatment of fathers and brothers had become almost a common practice with the Mughals. Aurangzeb himself could not escape the logic of such a ruthless approach. In his own lifetime he had to imprison two of his sons and drive another out of India. The war of succession among his sons after his death brought the doom of the Mughal empire nearer.

Aurangzeb was undoubtedly the ablest of Shah Jahan's sons. His character showed a rare combination of keen intellect and indomitable courage. It is doubtful if any other ruler of the medieval age worked as hard and was so devoted to what he considered his duty. Even in his old age he did not leave administrative affairs to his ministers or officials, but supervised these himself. He held court every day, delivered justice every Wednesday and recorded his instructions in his own hand on the body of letters, petitions etc. In 1695 A.D. the Italian traveller Careri wrote: "I admired to see him endorse the petitions (of those who had business) with his own hand without spectacles and by his cheerful, smiling countenance he seemed to be pleased with the employment". Aurangzeb gave up all luxury and lived an austere life. His profound faith in Islam had almost become a proverb. Many of his Muslim subjects regarded him as a saint. Even in the battlefield he did not fail to perform his daily act of worship. Though the head of a vast empire, he used to copy the Koran and make hats in his spare time. He was a good scholar. Though he wrote no books, his letters reveal his intimate acquaintance with literature as well as various subjects. The famous work on Islamic Law, *Fatwa-i-Alamgiri*, was compiled under his patronage. Learning, intellect, courage, devotion to religion, moral character, industry and devotion to duty—in all these Aurangzeb excelled the Muslim rulers of the medieval period. Even Akbar did not equal him in some of these qualities. Still, it was Aurangzeb's wrong policy which doomed the

Mughal empire to an early end. In religious affairs he was no liberal like Akbar. In his reign the Hindus were oppressed in various ways. As a result, the Rajputs, Jats, Marathas and Sikhs rose in revolt and weakened the Mughal empire. Charmed by the kind treatment they received from Akbar, the Rajputs gave up their lives without any hesitation in service of the Mughal empire. But Aurangzeb's policy of oppression goaded them to rebellion. Secondly, Aurangzeb believed neither his kith and kin nor his officials, but tried to manage everything himself. This naturally created great confusion, as it was impossible for a single man, however gifted, to personally supervise the manifold affairs of such a vast empire. The logical result was that the ministers and officials were not accustomed to do anything on their own responsibility, but looked to the emperor for his orders. Thus the sons and grandsons of Aurangzeb remained inexperienced in administrative affairs. The ministers were not willing to take any responsibility in any matter. The harmful effects of such practices became clear after the death of Aurangzeb. Finally, Aurangzeb was no lover of art and literature, as the Mughal rulers usually were. There was, therefore, a sudden decline in Mughal art under him. He forbade discussion of literature and music in his court.

Two phases of Aurangzeb's reign : In June, 1658 A.D., Aurangzeb occupied Agra, put his father in prison and took charge of the empire. His coronation was held in June, 1659, and he assumed the title of 'Alamgir' (the conqueror of the world). In 1632 A.D. he appeared in the Deccan in order to crush the Marathas. He did not return to North India and died in the Deccan in 1707 A.D. So his reign can be divided into two phases—(1) 1658-1681 A.D. ; (2) 1682-1707 A.D. The main events of the first phase were the clashes on the north-east and north-west frontiers, the revolt in Rajputana and the tussle with Shivaji in the Deccan. The chief incidents of the second phase were the struggle with Shivaji's successors in the Deccan and the conquest of Bijapur and Golkonda.

Aurangzeb : Extension of empire on the north-eastern

frontier : Immediately after ascending the throne Aurangzeb made his trusted general, Mir Jumla, the governor of Bengal and directed him to fight the Ahoms and the Maghs of Arakan.

In 1661 A.D. Mir Jumla advanced eastwards from Dacca with an army. The Mughals occupied Cooch Behar and captured the Ahom capital, Garhgaon, in 1662 A.D. The Ahom king, Jayadhwaj, promised to pay war compensation and annual tribute. Mir Jumla began his journey back to Dacca ; on the way he died in 1663 A.D. Four years later the Ahoms drove out the Mughals and recovered Gauhati.

After the death of Mir Jumla Shaista Khan, Aurangzeb's maternal uncle, was appointed the *Subedar* (governor) of Bengal. He defeated the Maghs and occupied Chittagong (1666 A.D.). He also captured the island of Sandwip in the Bay of Bengal.

Aurangzeb : Clashes on the north-west frontier : The turbulent tribes of the north-west frontier, the Afridis, the Yusufzais etc., though nominally under Mughal rule, were actually independent. In 1667 A.D. the Yusufzais and in 1672 A.D. the Afridis rose in revolt and Aurangzeb himself had to go to the frontier in order to put down the revolts. The Mughals ultimately tackled these rebellions by bribing the chiefs of the tribes.

These campaigns on the frontier proved very expensive for Aurangzeb. The political results were also particularly harmful. When a few years later Aurangzeb began his struggle with the Rajputs, he could not recruit Afghan soldiers for his army. On the contrary, skilled soldiers had to be sent from the Deccan in order to cope with the troubles on the frontier. This afforded some relief to Shivaji in his struggle against the Mughals.

Aurangzeb's religious policy : Aurangzeb's devotion to his own faith earns our respect, but there cannot be any justification for his policy towards the Hindus. He considered India to be

an Islamic State, ruled by the canons of Islam. The Hindus were not entitled to an honourable place in it. India with its predominantly Hindu population was *dar-ul-harb* (a non-Muslim country). Aurangzeb tried to make it an Islamic country, *dar-ul-Islam*, through his policy of oppression. That is why he oppressed the Hindu religion and community in so many ways for the spread of Islam.

Under Aurangzeb's orders Hindu temples were destroyed and construction of new temples was forbidden. Many famous temples at Mathura, Banaras, Jodhpur, Chitor and other places were demolished. Secondly, the Hindus were burdened with excessive taxation. The Muslims were not required to pay customs duties which the Hindus had to pay. In 1679 A.D. Aurangzeb revived the *Jeziya* all over the empire with a view "to spread Islam and put down the practice of infidelity". Thirdly, the Hindus were denied employment in accounts and revenue departments. When it was found that the administration could not just be carried on without the help of the Hindus, orders were issued that half the *peshkars* should be Muslim and half Hindu. Fourthly, a variety of restrictions affected the social status of the Hindus. All Hindus, except the Rajputs were forbidden to ride *palkis* (palanquins), elephants and thoroughbred horses and also to carry arms.

Aurangzeb's narrow religious policy proved politically disastrous for the Mughal empire. India is a predominantly Hindu country. It is, therefore, impossible to rule the country by restricting the rights, religious and political, of the Hindu community. Aurangzeb's policy forced the Jats, the Bundelas, the *Satnamis*, the Sikhs and the Rajputs to rise in revolt. The rise of the Marathas in the Deccan under Shivaji is also an indirect result of the short-sighted policy pursued by Aurangzeb.

It is not only the Hindus who had to taste the bitter fruits of Aurangzeb's dogmatic approach. Aurangzeb was a very orthodox Sunni and did not spare the Shias.

Aurangzeb : revolt of Hindus in North India : Of the

Hindu revolts against Aurangzeb in North India, those of the Jats, Bundelas, Satnamis, Sikhs and Rajputs deserve particular mention,

In 1669 A.D. the Jats in Mathura region rose in revolt



under the leadership of a zamindar named Gokla. After the revolt was put down, Gokla was executed. In 1668 A.D. the Jats again challenged Aurangzeb under Raja Ram. But Raja Ram was defeated and killed. After

this the Jats found a very powerful leader in Churaman, who led yet another Jat revolt against the Mughals after the death of Aurangzeb.

The Rajputs called Bundelas, residing in Bundelkhand, revolted in protest against Aurangzeb's religious policy. The first leader of the Bundela uprising, Champat Rai, committed suicide in order to forestall capture. His son, Ohhatrasal, continued the struggle against the Mughals for a long time and ultimately succeeded in founding an independent Hindu kingdom in Central India.

The Satnamis, a peace-loving Hindu sect, lived in the Patiala (Punjab) and Alwar (Rajasthan) regions. They rose in revolt in 1672 A.D., but were ruthlessly put down.

It has already been mentioned that Arjan, the Sikh Guru, was executed under orders of Jahangir in 1606 A.D. Under his son and successor, Guru Har Gobind (1606-1645 A.D.), the Sikhs took to arms in self-defence against the Mughals. Har Gobind maintained a large number of armed followers who clashed with the Mughals now and then on a small scale. Guru Har Rai (1645-1661 A.D.), son of Har Gobind, supported Dara in the war of succession for the Mughal throne. Guru Teg Bahadur (1664-1675 A.D.) became *persona non grata* with the Mughals for a number of reasons. In 1675 A.D. he was executed in Delhi under orders of Aurangzeb. He gave up his life, but did not forsake his religion.

The son of Teg Bahadur, Gobind Singh, the tenth and last Sikh Guru (1675-1708 A.D.), ushered in a new life among the Sikhs. He founded the *Khalsa* (the militant organisation based on religion). The fundamentals of Sikh religion remained unaltered, but there were changes in rituals and practices. The Sikhs gave up the caste system. All of them took the surname 'Singh'. There was a new procedure for initiation ceremonies known as *Pahul*. All Sikhs were henceforth to keep their hair, carry a *kripan*, keep

comb and *kankan* with them and wear short pyjamas. They were to worship iron (*i.e.*, arms) and always to be prepared to resort to arms in defence of religion. The new name, new dress and new practices canalised the enthusiasm, spirit and will to work of the Sikh community into the martial sphere. The changes initiated at the time of Har Gobind were completed under the leadership of Guru Gobind Singh. The ruthless policy of the Mughals was the main reason which changed the Sikhs into a martial race.

Guru Gobind was at the same time a religious leader, a military chief and a rebel. He was engaged in prolonged conflicts with the Hindu rulers of the mountainous regions of the Punjab and the local officials of the Mughal empire. His sons were cruelly done to death by the Mughal
Guru Gobind - *faujdar* of Sirhind. Guru Gobind supported Bahadur Shah in the war of succession that followed the death of Aurangzeb and went with him to the Deccan. There he was murdered by an Afghan (1708 A.D.). As desired by him, the Sikhs ceased to have any individual as Guru after his death and continued their struggle against the Mughals under their warrior-chief, Banda. The establishment of a Sikh kingdom in the Punjab was the outcome of this long conflict.

Revolt of Rajputs : Various political and religious factors caused revolts in Rajputana during the reign of Aurangzeb. In 1678 A.D. Jaswant Singh of Jodhpur died at a place called Jamrud on the north-west frontier. In the war of succession for Shah Jahan's throne he had backed Dara. Though later he submitted to Aurangzeb, the suspicious emperor was never able to forget this role of Jaswant Singh. As soon as the news of his death reached him, Aurangzeb annexed Jodhpur. Jaswant Singh had left no adult son and there was, therefore, nobody to make a stand against the Mughal army. Jodhpur occupied a very important position from the point of view of commerce and military strategy. This Rathor kingdom lay on the route from North India to the flourishing ports on the western coast. The reputation which the Rathors had built up as spirited fighters did not naturally recommend them to

Aurangzeb, who regarded them as a potential danger to the empire.

Meanwhile, within a few months of Jaswant Singh's death, twin sons were born to one of his queens in Lahore. One of them died immediately after birth. The other survived and was named Ajit Singh. In order to place this infant on the throne of Jodhpur the Rathor chief Durgadas went to Jodhpur with the infant prince and the queen-mother. The Rathor warriors rallied round his banner and defied the Mughals. Then Aurangzeb himself came to Ajmer and placed his son, Akbar, in charge of subduing Marwar (Jodhpur) in 1679 A.D.

While the Mughals were trying to tighten their grip over Marwar, Aurangzeb chose that very time for reviving the *Jeziya* (1679 A.D.). This angered Raj Singh, the powerful Rana of Mewar, who joined hands with the Rathors. He was related to the mother of Ajit Singh. He was well aware of the danger to Mewar in case the Mughals succeeded in subduing Marwar. Thus, the wrong policy of Aurangzeb endangered the very existence of the empire by forcing a combined revolt of the Rathors and Guhilots.

Akbar was unable to suppress Raj Singh. This displeased Aurangzeb who replaced him with his other son, Azam, and charged him with conquering Mewar. The struggle with the Rathors was continuing. Akbar went to Marwar on directions from the emperor. He was naturally very angry at the treatment meted out to him by his father. He now planned to occupy the throne of Delhi with the help of the Rajputs and with this object in view he revolted in 1681 A.D. Within a very short period, a stroke of skilful diplomacy on the part of Aurangzeb made the Rajputs desert Akbar. Finding it impossible to continue his revolt against the emperor without help from the Rajputs, Akbar fled to the Deccan and presented himself at the court of the Maratha ruler Sambhaji. When Aurangzeb himself arrived in the Deccan with an army, the unhappy Akbar fled to Persia by sea and there he died in 1704 A.D.

Rana Raj Singh of Mewar had died before Akbar rose in revolt. His son, Jai Singh, entered into a treaty with Aurangzeb in 1681 A.D. He ceded three *parganas* in lieu of the *Jeziya*. The struggle with Marwar continued. Aurangzeb went to the Deccan in order to drive away Akbar from the Maratha court and to complete the conquest of the Deccan. His generals were unable to crush the Rathors even after prolonged fighting. There was no peace in Marwar as long as Aurangzeb was alive. During the reign of his son, Bahadur Shah, Ajit Singh captured Jodhpur and ascended the paternal throne. The long struggle with the Rajputs weakened the Mughal empire financially as well as militarily. During the reigns of Akbar, Jahangir and Shah Jahan the loyalty and the military assistance of the Rajputs had helped the process of empire-building. The disastrous policy pursued by Aurangzeb led the Rajputs to apply their strength in under mining the Mughal empire.

Effects of Rajput
revolt

Aurangzeb and Marathas: The revolt of the Hindus during the reign of Aurangzeb was not confined to North India. The revolt in the South was led by Shivaji, the founder of Maratha power. The long struggle with Shivaji and his successors almost put an end to the Mughal empire in the South.

After the fall of the Bahmani Kingdom, Maharashtra was ruled by the Sultans of Ahmadnagar and Bijapur. Under the Muslim Sultans many Maratha *Jagirdars* secured high posts and increased their power. Their experience in administration and war made the Marathas a powerful people. In the 15th and 16th centuries some religious reformers were instrumental in creating a spirit of nationalism among the Marathas. In this connection we must mention Eknath, Tukaram and Ramdas. Their influence made the Marathas inspired with the ideal of shaking off their bondage to the Muslim rulers. This dream became a reality under the leadership of Shivaji.

Life of Shivaji: Historians disagree about the date of birth of Shivaji. While some hold that he was born in 1627 A.D., others are inclined to place the event in 1630 A.D. He was born in the hill fort of Shivner in the Poona district. His

father Shahji was a general in the service of Ahmadnagar and a *jagirdar* of Poona. When Shah Jahan annexed Ahmadnagar, Shahji secured service under the Sultan of Bijapur, received a *jagir* in Karnatak and went to live there with his wife Tuka Bai. His neglected wife, Jija Bai, continued to live in Poona with her child Shivaji. The guardian of Jija Bai and Shivaji was a faithful Brahmin employee of Shahji, named Dadaji Kond Dev. In his childhood and boyhood Shivaji was deprived of the affection of his father. As he was brought under the affectionate

Boyhood care of his mother, his attachment to his mother was naturally very strong. It is not very likely that he received any education. Like Haidar Ali and Ranjit Singh after him, he was unlettered. But the stories of the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, which his mother related to him, inspired him to form his character on the ideal of the heroes of these two Hindu epics. He was by nature courageous and ambitious. He became skilled in riding and fencing in his boyhood. At a very young age he made himself the leader of a small band of armed followers. Under his leadership the peasants known as *Maolis* were transformed into bold fighters.

Shivaji interested himself in founding a kingdom when he was only in teens and his military resources were modest. In 1646 A.D., at the age of 16 or 19, he captured the fort of

Struggle with
Bijapur

Torna in Bijapur and built a new fort, Raigarh, near it. He seized Kondana from an agent of Bijapur. In 1647 A.D. Dadaji Kond Dev died.

No longer under a guardian, Shivaji was now completely free to proceed with his plans. He occupied some places under Bijapur. Gradually he became the master of a region well-defended by mountain forts. Then the Sultan of Bijapur imprisoned Shahji. Some historians are of the opinion that behind the imprisonment of Shahji lay the Sultan's displeasure at Shivaji's accession of strength; by putting the father behind the bars he wanted to put a check on the ambition of the son. Others, however, hold the view that Shahji met this punishment for his insubordination. Anyhow, he was released sometime

after this. Shivaji kept quiet for some years (1649-1655 A.D.), though this did not prevent him from capturing the fort of Purandar during this period. He next attempted, with renewed vigour, to extend his power. Treachery gave him the small Maratha kingdom, Jawli, and thus opened the door of the south to him.

Aurangzeb, who was then the Mughal Subadar of the Deccan, had attacked Bijapur in 1657 A.D. Though the Mughals tried to bring Shivaji to their side at that time, he sided with Bijapur and attacked the Mughal territories of Ahmadnagar and Junar. Though Aurangzeb was very angry at this, he had not the time to take necessary measures to teach Shivaji a lesson. Within a short period of the conclusion of the treaty between the Mughals and Bijapur, Aurangzeb started for North India with a view to capturing the throne of Delhi. The Sultan of Bijapur was relieved at this and turned his attention to fighting Shivaji. In 1659 A.D. Afzal Khan, a general of Bijapur, advanced to Maharashtra at the head of an army. Knowing fully well that he could not defeat Afzal in any direct clash, Shivaji took shelter in the strong fort of Pratapgarrh. In order to discuss the terms of a treaty Afzal visited Shivaji with only two followers and was killed. According to Muslim historians, Shivaji murdered his helpless enemy by foul play. The Maratha Afzal Khan

historians, on the other hand, hold that Afzal planned to murder Shivaji by a surprise attack under the pretext of discussing treaty terms; Shivaji came to know of this beforehand and killed Afzal in self-defence. The letters of contemporary English merchants tend to confirm this view. Be that as it may, Afzal's sudden death brought confusion in his army. The Marathas occupied South Konkan and Kolhapur. Then the army of Bijapur besieged the fort of Panhala where Shivaji had taken shelter, but Shivaji escaped by a ruse (1660 A.D.).

It has already been stated that Shivaji's rise to power had attracted the attention of Aurangzeb when he was the Subadar of the Deccan. He was, however, not able at that time to

take any steps for subduing this valiant and clever Maratha leader. After making his position secure on the throne,

Shivaji's
struggle with
Aurangzeb :

Aurangzeb determined to crush Shivaji. Under his order Shaista Khan, the Subadar of the Deccan, occupied Poona and Chakan and drove away Shivaji's army from the Kalyan region

in South Konkan. Shivaji made peace with Bijapur, helped by his father, Shahji, and pitted himself against the Mughals with all his might. In 1663 A.D. Shivaji made a surprise raid at night on Shaista Khan's camp, wounding him and killing his

(1) Shaista Khan son and some of his bodyguards. Shaista Khan was in a fright and left Poona. Aurangzeb was displeased with him and transferred him to Bengal. Next year (1664 A.D.) Shivaji raided the prosperous port of Surat and captured a huge booty. Surat was at that time the chief centre of commerce in Western India.

(2) Raid of Surat The plight of Shaista Khan and the raid on Surat increased Shivaji's fame.

After this, Aurangzeb sent Jai Singh of Ambar and Dilir Khan to the Deccan. Both of them were skilled generals. Moreover, it is doubtful if there was anybody at that age in the Mughal court who could equal Jai Singh in diplomacy. As a result of his diplomatic skill the Sultan of Bijapur did not come to the assistance of Shivaji against the Mughals.

(3) Jai Singh Some of the *jagirdars* supporting Shivaji were lured by Jai Singh to join hands with him. Jai Singh besieged the fort of Purandar and Raigarh, Shivaji's capital. Shivaji was left with no other alternative but to sign a treaty. This is the famous treaty of Purandar (1665 A.D.). Shivaji ceded to the Mughal emperor some districts with an annual income of 16 lakhs of rupees and 23 forts. As a vassal of the emperor he was allowed to retain only 12 forts, including Raigarh, and a few districts with an income of four lakhs. He was also obliged to agree to assist the Mughal emperor with five thousand horsemen in his Deccan campaign. Jai Singh then attacked Bijapur. Shivaji helped him in this campaign.

Thinking that if Shivaji stayed in the Deccan he could

again be a trouble to the Mughals, Jai Singh induced him to go to Agra and meet the emperor. What.

(4) Shivaji at Agra exactly was the reason which prompted Shivaji to agree to this suggestion of Jai Singh

is not clearly known. Anyway, in 1666 A.D. he arrived at Agra and met Aurangzeb. He openly voiced his protest when he was received with less than his due share of courtesy at the Mughal court. Aurangzeb was displeased at this and placed Shivaji under some restraint. It was then planned to send Shivaji to the north-western frontier where he was probably to be murdered. But Shivaji made his escape from Agra by deceiving his guards with a stratagem (1666 A.D.).

Returning to his own kingdom, Shivaji did not immediately resume his struggle against the Mughals. In 1668 A. D. a treaty was concluded with the emperor by which his title, 'Raja', was recognised. During this period Shivaji devoted himself to improving the administration. But conflict was renewed in 1670 A.D. Many of the forts which Shivaji had ceded to the Mughals in terms of the treaty of Purandar.

(6) Renewal of conflict were now recaptured by him. Surat was again raided. In 1672 A.D. Shivaji demanded *chauth* (military contribution) from Surat. In 1674 A.D. his coronation ceremony was held at Raigarh. He assumed the titles of *Chhatrapati* and *Gobrahmanapratipalaka*. Meanwhile, he had raided Berar and Baglana. The Mughal army could not take any active steps to check Shivaji due to quarrel between prince Muazzam, the governor of the Deccan, and the powerful general Dilir Khan. Moreover, a very large number of soldiers had been sent from the Deccan to the north-western frontier in order to suppress the frontier tribes. As a result, the Mughal army in the Deccan had been weakened.

Shivaji then entered into an alliance with the Sultan of Golkonda and with his financial and military help attacked Karnatak. During 1677-1678 A.D. famous forts such as Gingi, Vellore etc. fell into his hands. He also occupied parts of Mysore. The region under his control in Karnataka had

an income of nearly 80 lakhs of rupees. His conquests remained incomplete due to his sudden death in 1680 A.D. At the time of his death, his authority had been firmly established in the extensive region from Dharampur State near Surat in the north to Karwar in Kanara district in the south. In the west his kingdom stretched to the Arabian Sea ; however, the Portuguese ports of Daman, Salsette, Bassein, Chaul and Goa were not under his control. In the east his authority extended from Baglana to Kolhapur. Besides these, the northern, central and western portions of Mysore as also a substantial part of Karnatak came under his sway.

Historians of all ages and all nations have expressed, as if with one voice, their admiration for the character of Shivaji. He was devoted to his own faith and deeply revered his mother. Luxury was foreign to his character. Respect for women was one of his sterling qualities. Kafi Khan, the Muslim historian of the time, has made many caustic remarks about Shivaji even he, however, has attested that Shivaji was never guilty of any disrespect to women. He was a defender of Hindu religion and fought the Mughals for the establishment of an independent kingdom. However, he never showed any disrespect to Islam. If any copy of the sacred Koran fell into his hands during his bouts of fighting, he used to give it to some Muslim. He contributed land free of tax to meet the expenses of mosques. He had respect for Muslim holy men. At the time of his raid on Surat he did not oppress the Christian missionaries. In an age in which Aurangzeb oppressed his Hindu subjects for professing a different religion, the respect shown by Shivaji for the faith of his enemies excites our wonder and admiration.

Shivaji deserves our respect not only for his personal magnanimity and individual greatness ; the uniqueness of his genius in military and political spheres impresses us equally. By force of arms and through political sagacity he founded quite a large independent kingdom. He inherited little from his father, who

was a mere *jagirdar*. Still Shivaji succeeded in building up an army and engaged the mighty Mughals in a prolonged struggle. The superior might of the Mughal empire did not make him shaky.

Military and
political genius

Shivaji did not stop at establishing a kingdom by resort to arms. By introducing a sound administrative system, he placed the newly founded kingdom on a firm footing. He inspired the Marathas with the stirring ideal of freedom. Under his leadership this courageous people learnt to sacrifice life itself in defence of religion and for attainment of independence. After the death of

Founder of a
nation

Shivaji, Aurangzeb himself went to the Deccan and tried to put down the Marathas. But the ideal of Shivaji had so inspired the people that the might of the Mughals could not crush them. Shivaji was not only the builder of a State ; he was the founder of a nation. That is why the people of India still revere his memory.

Shivaji's civil administration : A kingdom based solely on armed might never lasts long. To ensure stability, a sound administrative system is essential. Also imperative is a community of minds between the ruler and the ruled. Shivaji not only established a large independent kingdom by force of arms. He ensured its permanence by introducing an excellent administrative system. In this he is an equal of Sher Shah and Akbar.

Though Shivaji was an autocrat like the Mughal emperors, he aimed at the well-being of his subjects. He ruled with the help of a council of eight ministers (*pradhan*). It was composed of the *Peshwa* (*Mukhya Pradhan*), the *Amatya* (*Majumdar*), the *Mantri* (*Wakianavis*), the *Dabir* (*Samanta*), the *Sachiva* (*Surnis*), the *Senapati*, the *Pandit Rao* and the *Nyayadhisa*. The *Peshwa* was the Prime Minister. He looked after the welfare of the people and the interests of the kingdom. The *Amatya* was the minister in charge of finance. The *Mantri* recorded the daily activities of the King. The *Dabir* was in charge of foreign affairs. Royal correspondence was entrusted to the *Sachiva* ; he also examined the accounts relating to local administration. The *Senapati* led the army and the *Nyayadhisa* was the Chief Justice of the Kingdom. The

Ashta pradhan

Pandit Rao managed the religious affairs. Except the *Nyaya-dhisa* and the *Pandit Rao*, all the other ministers also led the army in case of need. If they were absent from the capital in discharge of their military duties, their deputies (Deputy Ministers) looked after their other duties. Three of the ministers also acted as provincial chiefs. Shivaji could at his will appoint any person as a minister and dismiss him too. The ministers had no power to interfere in the activities of the King. Their duty lay in carrying on the administration as directed by the King.

Shivaji's kingdom was divided into several provinces (*prant*). Each province was under an administrator. Three among the eight ministers acted as provincial chiefs. Their appointment and dismissal was at the pleasure of the King. Provincial administration Each of them performed his duties with the assistance of eight top officials. The powers of the ruler of Karnatak, which lay far from the capital, were greater as compared to the other provincial chiefs.

Each *prant* was divided into several units called *pargana* and *taraf*. One *taraf* comprised a few villages. Shivaji arranged land-surveys and fixed the revenues accordingly. Revenue system One-third (later two-fifths) of the produce of the land was the King's revenue. The peasants could pay revenue either in kind or in cash. Without depriving the hereditary *Deshmukhs* and *Deshpandes* of their long-standing right to collection of revenue, Shivaji placed this responsibility mainly on the shoulders of Government officials. His revenue system was greatly indebted to that of Malik Ambar, the famous minister of Ahmadnagar.

The revenue from the land was not sufficient to meet the cost of administration and maintenance of the army. Maharashtra is a hilly country with an infertile soil. The produce of the land was insufficient to fill the royal treasury. In order to increase his income Shivaji collected contributions known as *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* from regions outside his kingdom. These amounted respectively to one-fourth and one-tenth of the

revenues. These were collected from Bijapur and the southern regions of the Mughal empire. In case the ruler of a region refused to pay these contributions the Maratha cavalry raided the region and made its inhabitants totally destitute. Collection of *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* not only increased Shivaji's revenues. In connection with raising these contributions Maratha military and political influence spread to Bijapur and the southern regions of the Mughal empire. The importance of *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* cannot be minimised in a review of the rise of the Marathas to political-supremacy.

Military system of Shivaji : Shivaji's army comprised thirty to forty thousand horsemen and an infantry of ten thousand. The war-elephants numbered 1260, the camels 1500-3000. There were eighty cannons. Before

Army

Shivaji the Maratha horsemen used to engage themselves in cultivation for some months in a year ; the rest of the year they spent in the army. Shivaji built up a regular army. As a result, the horsemen no longer attended to cultivation. They were always kept in a state of preparedness for war. The cavalry was divided into two classes. Those who received horse, arms and clothing from the State were known as the *Bargirs*. Those who brought their own horses and equipment were called *Silahdars*. Shivaji reduced the number of the *Silahdars*, replacing them with *Bargirs* ; for unless the latter formed the majority the State could hardly exercise as much control over the army as was desirable.

Shivaji built up his army on his own and left no stone unturned to make it a well-disciplined force. The vices and defects which attended the Mughal army Shivaji was able to keep away from his own. He forbade the entry of women in the Maratha camp. The Maratha generals were not given to luxury like their Mughal counterparts. Shivaji's soldiers could not keep booty collected in war ; these had to be deposited in the Government treasury. The Maratha soldiers lived on a moderate diet ; they were averse to luxury and were industrious. That is why the Mughal army, easy-going and prone to luxury, was never able to smash the Marathas.

Shivaji never gave open battle to the Mughals because of his numerical inferiority; but he used to harass the Mughal army by seizing its provisions in course of surprise raids. This is one of the main reasons of his military success. When he found himself in great danger, he took shelter in forts.

War strategy The forts played a very important role in Shivaji's military system. The hilly forts of Maharashtra were practically impregnable. Shivaji built many forts. At the time of his death he had 240 forts under his control. Each fort was under the combined command of three chiefs. Thus even if one or two of them turned traitor, there was little risk of a fort falling into the enemy's hands.

Shivaji himself commanded the army in battle. However, the affairs of the army were entrusted to the *pradhan* known as *Senapati*. The commander of the cavalry was the *Sarnabat*. He had under him the *Panchhajari* and the *Hajari*. The *Havaldar* led a unit of 25 horsemen. Five such *Havaldars* were under a *Jumladar* ten of whom, in their turn, were subordinate to a *Hajari*. The army officers received pay instead of *jagirs*. Shivaji was quite aware of the harmful effects of the *jagir* system introduced under the Muslims.

Navy Shivaji had to fight several engagements on sea, as he was in rivalry with the English and the Portuguese as also the Sidis or the Abyssinians of the island of Janjira, south of Bombay. His navy consisted of four hundred vessels of different types. The principal port was Malwan. The example set by Shivaji of extending influence over the sea was followed by the *Ángria* chiefs in the 18th century.

Aurangzeb's war with Shivaji's successors: After his death in 1680 A.D. Shivaji was succeeded by his eldest son, Sambhaji. He was pleasure-loving but brave. Even when Aurangzeb came personally to the Deccan at the head of an army, Sambhaji was unable to appreciate the significance of this move and frittered away the strength of his army by fighting the Portuguese and the Sidis of Janjira. After his occupation of Bijapur

Sambhaji
[1680-89]

and Golkonda Aurangzeb defeated and captured Sambhaji, who was executed under orders of the emperor (1689 A.D.). The Mughal army occupied Raigarh, the capital of the Marathas, where Sahu, the minor son of Sambhaji, fell into their hands. Rajaram, the second son of Shivaji, fled from Maharashtra and took shelter in the strong fort of Ginji in Karnatak.

Rajaram
[1689-1700]

Acknowledging him as the ruler of the Maratha kingdom which was on the verge of extinction, the Marathas under such leaders as Santaji Ghorpade and Dhanaji Jadav continued to fight the Mughals. The Mughal army could not suppress them. After the death of Rajaram in 1700 A.D. Satara fell to the Mughals.

Then Tara Bai, the widow of Rajaram, placed her minor son, Shivaji III, on the throne and continued the resistance to the Mughals. Gradually the Marathas gained in strength and plundered Mughal provinces such as Berar, Malwa and Golkonda. Aurangzeb died in 1707 A.D. before he could succeed in crushing the Marathas.

Shivaji III
[1700-1712]

Bijapur and Golkonda : It has already been indicated how Aurangzeb's attempts at conquest of Bijapur and Golkonda failed during Shah Jahan's reign. While pursuing Akbar in the Deccan, Aurangzeb at last occupied Bijapur and Golkonda in 1686 A.D. and 1687 A.D. respectively. The last two Sultans of the Adil Shahi and the Qutb Shahi dynasties were held as captives at the fort of Daulatabad. Their kingdoms were made parts of the Mughal empire. Besides political considerations, Aurangzeb, who was an orthodox Sunni, cherished hatred towards these two Shia dynasties on religious grounds also. At long last, the Mughal policy of conquest in the South reached the peak of its success. The task initiated by Akbar was completed by Aurangzeb. Some historians are of the opinion that had Aurangzeb not put an end to Bijapur and Golkonda as separate entities, he would have received assistance from these two kingdoms in his struggle against the Marathas. It is, however, difficult to believe that these two States, lacking in

strength and vitality, could have made any impact on Aurangzeb's war against the Marathas.

Last years of Aurangzeb : The fall of Bijapur and Golkonda and the execution of Sambhaji may outwardly seem to be the culminating points in Aurangzeb's long journey to success. A vast empire stretching from Ghazni to Chittagong and Kashmir to Karnatak was now his to rule over. This empire was divided into 21 Subahs and the revenues from the land yielded Rs. 33 crores 65 lakhs annually. But the long, futile struggle with the Marathas which frittered away the strength of the empire exposed the failure of Aurangzeb's policy. Though he defeated the Marathas time and again, he could not crush them. The endless war in the Deccan made the Mughal treasury empty. Not receiving their pay regularly, the soldiers became rebellious. On the other hand, as the result of the emperor's long absence from North India, the administrative machinery in the provinces of that region almost ceased to function. The empire was on the brink of anarchy. Napoleon used to say about the Peninsular War, "the Spanish ulcer has ruined me." Aurangzeb's failure was brought about by the Deccan ulcer. After reaching the last stage of his long journey through life the aged emperor was shocked to find that the stern rule of fifty years had simply been in vain ; the base of the empire had become loose.

Maratha royal dynasty : Shahu, who had no issue, had adopted Ramraja. Ramraja, Shahu II and Pratap Singh were kept prisoners at the Satara fort ; the Peshwas ruled the kingdom. After the third Maratha War Lord Hastings placed Pratap Singh on the throne at Satara. After the death of Shahji without issue, Lord Dalhousie made Satara part of the territories of the East India Company. Shivaji's successors continued to rule at Kolhapur.

Model Questions :

1. Sketch the character of Aurangzeb. To what extent was he responsible for the fall of the Mughal Empire ?
2. Criticise Aurangzeb's policy towards the Hindus.

3. Give an account of Aurangzeb's policy towards the Rajputs.
4. In what respects was the policy of Akbar reversed by Aurangzeb, and what were the consequences of this change?
5. Give a short account of Shivaji's relations with the Mughal Empire, and describe his system of civil and military administration.
6. Give a short account of the life of Shivaji and mention what you consider his principal achievements.
7. Why is Shivaji famous in history?
8. Sketch the growth of the Maratha power under Shivaji. What were his ideals?
9. What do you know about Aurangzeb's policy towards the Marathas? What were the consequences of that policy?

CHAPTER 22

Fall of the Mughal Empire

Successors of Aurangzeb (1707-1858 A.D.) : After the death of Aurangzeb his sons fell out among themselves, true to the tradition among the Mughals. The eldest son, Shah Alam Bahadur Shah, emerged successful out of the struggle and occupied the throne for five years (1707-1712 A.D.). After his death his eldest son, Jahandar Shah, in his turn ousted his brothers and ascended the throne. He was de-throned and killed after a very short reign. With the help of two powerful nobles, Sayyid Abdulla Khan and Sayyid Hussain Ali Khan, Farrukh Siyar, a nephew (brother's son) of Jahandar Shah, captured the throne. But a few years later the Sayyid brothers removed and murdered him and in order to retain their influence put two grandsons of Bahadur Shah, Rafi-ud-darajat and Rafi-ud-daula, in turn on the throne. Due to their death within a short period Mubammad Shah, another grandson of Bahadur Shah, ascended the throne with the help of the Sayyid brothers.

Muhammad Shah reigned for a long period (1719-1748). The Mughal empire fell to pieces under him. His Prime Minister,

Nizam-ul-Mulk, founded an independent kingdom in the Deccan, which later came to be known as Hyderabad. The viceroys of Oudh and Bengal-Bihar-Orissa, Saadat Khan and Alivardi Khan, made themselves independent rulers for all practical purposes. The Marathas established their authority over Gujarat and Malwa. The invasion of Nadir Shah resulted in the loss of Kabul and the north-western frontier region. The Sikhs became powerful in the Punjab.

The successors of Muhammad Shah were emperors only in name. The last Mughal emperor, Bahadur Shah II (1837-1858 A.D.), was exiled in Rangoon in 1858 A.D. on the charge of taking part in the Sepoy 'Mutiny'. Thus the Mughals came to a sad end.

Foreign invasions : In 1738 A.D. Nadir Shah, the powerful and aggressive ruler of Persia, occupied Afghanistan and invaded India. Muhammad Shah was then the emperor in Delhi. In 1739 A.D. he was defeated in battle at Karnal by Nadir Shah. The victorious Nadir Shah reached Delhi with Muhammad Shah as his captive. A general massacre followed in Delhi, the number of those killed reaching the figure of nearly one and a half lakh. At last Nadir Shah left Delhi and returned to his country with 80 crores of rupees, the Peacock Throne of Shah Jahan, the Kohinoor diamond and other priceless treasures as his booty. Kabul and the territories on the banks of the Indus became parts of his empire. Muhammad Shah retained the throne in Delhi.

In 1748 A.D. Nadir Shah was assassinated and his general, Ahmad Shah Durrani (or Abdali), became the ruler of Afghanistan. As a result of his repeated attacks the weak Mughal emperor, Alamgir II, was compelled to cede Sind, the Punjab and Kashmir to him. The Marathas occupied the Punjab sometime later. In 1759 A.D. Ahmad Shah appeared in India for the fifth time and re-established his authority in the Punjab. In 1761 A.D., at the third battle of Panipat, he defeated the Marathas. The Sikhs had meanwhile become a powerful force in the Punjab.

Even after four campaigns Ahmad Shah could not suppress the Sikhs. As a result, the Punjab became virtually a Sikh domain.

Causes of downfall of Mughal Empire : In a discussion of the causes of the fall of the Mughal empire the first point that inevitably arises is that its vast extent stood in the way of its permanence. In those days it was next to impossible to maintain peace and order in an empire extending from Afghanistan to Assam and Kashmir to Mysore. Railways and telegraphs were then things of the future. Transport and communication were, therefore, time-consuming and beset with various other difficulties. The emperor could not possibly supervise adequately the administration of all parts of this extensive empire. When revolts broke out in remote provinces, it took time to send troops and restore imperial authority. These difficulties were clearly evident during Aurangzeb's reign. As long as he was in North India, the Marathas in the Deccan could not be properly tackled and Bijapur and Golkonda could not be annexed. Again, when Aurangzeb left North India for the Deccan, a variety of troubles arose in North India.

Secondly, Akbar, Jahangir, Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb were wise, industrious and dutiful emperors. This is why in spite of the vast extent of their empire, peace and order prevailed on the whole. Of course, revolts broke out now and then ; but the emperors did not fail to suppress these. The successors of Aurangzeb were weak and worthless ; they were playthings in the hands of their ministers. The burden which proved heavy even for Akbar and Aurangzeb was disastrous for such weak emperors. Weak-minded and pleasure-loving emperors like Jahandar Shah and Farrukh Siyar, on whom the mantle of the Great Mughals like Akbar and Aurangzeb had fallen, were singularly unfit for such an exalted position. They paved the way to the fall of the Mughal empire.

Thirdly, if the emperor himself was incapable of governing the empire, clever and dutiful ministers could do so and save

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Thirdly, if the emperor himself was incapable of governing the empire, clever and dutiful ministers could do so and save

it from ruin. Unfortunately, however, in the 18th century the ministers of the Mughal emperors were more prone to advance their own interests than those of the empire they were supposed to serve. Ministers like the Sayyid brothers, Nizam-ul-Mulk and Ghazi-ud-din were directly responsible for the rot that set in in the empire. The nobles of the Mughal court were divided into coteries and engaged in petty rivalries. Had they tried unitedly, they could perhaps have saved the empire. At least they could have given it a fresh lease of life.

Fourthly, Aurangzeb's policy and administrative system brought the doom of the Mughal empire nearer. His intolerance of other faiths forced the Rajputs, Jats and Sikhs to rise in revolt. He was personally not a little responsible for the rise of the Marathas. The prolonged wars in Rajputana and the Deccan were very costly in terms of men and resources; the drain was so severe that the empire just could not make it up. Aurangzeb, who had no confidence in his sons and grandsons as also the top officials, had thereby offended their sense of responsibility. He forgot that even the all-powerful emperor could not possibly govern the empire on his own without relying on others.

Foreign invasions led to a dwindling of the power and prestige of the Mughal empire. Nadir Shah and Ahmad Shah Durrani proved that the worthless emperors were totally incapable of defending the empire against foreign invasion. As long as the Mughal army was a formidable force, foreign invaders dared not cross the frontiers of India. The Mughal army began to lose its strength during the reign of Shah Jahan. The rot was complete after the death of Aurangzeb. An English historian has expressed the view that the increasing military inefficiency of the Mughal army was the principal cause of the downfall of the Mughal empire.

The Mughal empire was no doubt well-governed on the whole. It would, however, seem from the accounts of European

travellers that the local officials not infrequently oppressed the people. The Mughal court, composed mainly of the nobles, did not take any effective measures to protect the interests of the peasants.

7. Maladministration
There was, therefore, little loyalty among the common people towards the emperor. They never could understand how the interests of the empire were mixed up with their own.

8. Lack of national consciousness
During the reign of Akbar, a sound administration and a liberal religious policy opened the way for an ultimate fusion of the Hindu and Muslim communities. The emergence of a national consciousness seemed to be a none-too-distant possibility. But the disastrous policy of Aurangzeb nipped this

great possibility in the bud. No Indian state based on the united loyalty of the Hindus and the Muslims emerged after all.

Peshwas (1707-1761 A.D.) : After the death of Aurangzeb in 1707 A.D. Shahu, the son of Sambhaji, was released by the Mughals and ascended the throne of the Marathas. He ruled from 1708 to 1749 A.D.

It has already been mentioned that of the eight ministers under Shivaji the Peshwa was the chief. Shahu appointed a Brahmin named Balaji Viswanath as the Peshwa. After this, due to various reasons the post of the Peshwa became hereditary and members of Balaji Vishwanath's family occupied the post one after another. The Peshwas were the real founders of the Maratha empire. It was under them that the Marathas became the major political power in India.

The founder of the Peshwa dynasty, Balaji Viswanath (1714-20), secured from the Mughal emperor Farrukh Siyar the right to collect *Chauth* and *Sardeshmukhi* in the name of Shahu from the six Mughal *Subahs* (Berar, Khandesh, Balaji Viswanath Aurangabad, Bidar, Hyderabad and Bijapur) of the Deccan. As a result, practically the whole of the Deccan came under the influence of the Marathas.

After the death of Balaji Viswanath in 1720 A.D. Shahu made his son Baji Rao the new Peshwa (1720-40). He was a military genius and a far-sighted statesman. He wanted to

destroy the decaying Mughal empire and replace it by a Hindu *Padshahi* (empire). Under him Maratha authority was established in Malwa and Gujarat. Baji Rao I attacked the Ganges-Jumna Doab and came near Delhi in 1737 A.D. He then defeated the Nizam, who had to enter into a treaty recognising Maratha authority over Malwa. In 1739 A.D. Chimnaji Appa, the brother of the Peshwa, defeated the Portuguese and captured Salsetti and Bassein. In 1740 A.D. Baji Rao died at the age of only forty-two. He made the Marathas the undisputed masters of the Deccan and laid the foundation of their political predominance in North India.

After the death of Baji Rao, Shahu made his son, Balaji Baji Rao, the new Peshwa (1740-61). Shahu died nine years later. At the time of his death Shahu invested the Peshwa with supreme power. Balaji Baji Rao imprisoned Raja Ram, the adopted son and heir of Shahu, at the fort of Satara and began to rule independently. Thus the dynasty founded by Shivaji lost political authority.

Balaji Baji Rao occupied parts of Mysore and extended Maratha authority in Karnatak. In 1760 A. D. the Marathas, under the leadership of Sadashiv Rao Bhau, the Peshwa's cousin, defeated the Nizam of Hyderabad at Udgir; he ceded a part of his territory with an income of 60 lakhs and some famous forts to the Marathas. This was the zenith of Maratha power in the Deccan. In North India also they established their authority over Rajputana and the Ganges-Jumna Doab. A political understanding with the crafty wazir of the weak emperor extended Maratha influence in the Mughal capital, Delhi. In 1758 A.D. Raghunath Rao, the Peshwa's brother, attacked the Punjab and occupied parts of it. The Maratha army advanced up to the Khyber pass. But no effective steps were taken to keep intact the newly established Maratha power in the Punjab. The expedition to the Punjab cost the Marathas heavily in money and made a conflict with the Afghans inevitable.

North-western India had already been torn apart from the

Mughal empire and was under the rule of Ahmad Shah Abdali of Afghanistan. The year after Raghunath Rao's expedition Ahmad Shah invaded India and occupied the Punjab. In order to resist him Balaji Baji Rao sent a huge army under the command of Sadashiv Rao Bhau. He occupied Delhi and arrived at Panipat. Meanwhile, Abdali had been able to win over to his side



Shuja-ud-daula of Oudh and a great enemy of the Marathas, the Rohilla chief Najib Khan. But the Hindus oppressed by the Marathas—the Jats and the Rajputs—remained neutral. This lack of unity on the side of the Hindus made the Marathas face alone the combined might of the Muslims. Sadashiv Rao

showed lack of foresight in conducting the campaign. The vast Maratha army, kept stationed at Panipat, was already exhausted through lack of food and pestilence. At last, on the 14th January, 1761 A.D., the Marathas were toally smashed by Ahmad Shah at the third battle of Panipat. Sadashiv Rao Bhan, Viswas Rao, the eldest son of the Peshwa, and several other Maratha leaders were killed. The dead and the wounded numbered legions. Hearing the news of the terrible disaster Balaji Baji Rao died of broken heart within a few months.

The third battle of Panipat is a decisive event of Indian history. Ahmad Shah gained nothing permanently by his victory. Let alone extend his authority over North India, he was not even able to establish himself firmly in the Punjab, for the Sikhs were now a power to reckon with. But the battle was disastrous for the Maratha power. It resulted in almost complete loss of the Peshwa's authority in North India. In

Results of
Maratha defeat
at Panipat

the Deccan the results of the victory at Udgir came to naught ; the Nizam reasserted his authority. In Mysore, now free of Maratha menace for at least some years, Haider Ali got his chance to rise to power. After some years Peshwa Madhav Rao I and Mahadji Sindhia were able to re-establish Maratha authority in North India. But the British had already made themselves masters of Bengal and Bihar and changes within the Maratha empire had reduced the power and prestige of the Peshwas. Towards the end of the 18th century Sindhia and Holkar—not the Peshwa—symbolised Maratha power in North India. The defeat at Panipat had shattered all hopes of the Maratha empire dominating the whole of North India under the leadership of the Peshwa.

Model Questions :

1. Trace the growth of the Maratha power under the first three Peshwas.
2. Account for the defeat of the Marathas in the third battle of Panipat. What were the effects of this battle ?
3. Enumerate the causes of the downfall of the Mughal Empire.
4. Explain the importance of the following date in Indian history—1761.
5. Write short notes on :—Nadir Shah, Ahmad Shah Abdali.

CHAPTER 23

India under the Mughals

Administrative system under the Mughals : Akbar :

Though Babur founded the Mughal empire in India, it was Akbar who really introduced the Mughal administrative system. Babur ruled in India only for four years.

Babur and
Humayun

During this short period he had neither the time nor the opportunity to set up an administrative system. Humayun was so busy with his struggle in defence of the empire that he also had neither time nor opportunity for reform of the administrative system introduced by the Afghans. Sher Shah ruled for only a few years

Sher Shah and
Akbar

and even during this short period was busy extending his empire ; nevertheless he proved his originality by introducing administrative reforms. Akbar was indebted to Sher Shah in many ways, particularly in regard to his revenue system. Those who succeed in building a sound administration are always, more or less, in debt to their predecessors. Akbar was no exception to this.

No empire can be made secure by force of arms alone. To ensure permanence, a sound administrative system is essential, so as to provoke the fear and draw the respect of the people. Akbar was well aware of this.

Akbar as empire-
builder

The system of administration set up by him remained unchanged for a long time. His successors introduced no basic changes or reforms. Among the empire-builders of the world Akbar deserves a very high place for his system of administration.

In those days democratic ways were unknown in India ; all power rested with the ruler. But even though he enjoyed

absolute power, Akbar did not oppress his subjects. His sense of responsibility was unique. He considered himself responsible for the welfare of his subjects; he was unsparing in his efforts for their well-being. Akbar regularly supervised the various branches of administration. The emperor's daily life was full of activities. Akbar held court thrice daily. A day was set apart regularly for administration of justice. All important matters relating to administration were placed before the emperor for his personal consideration. There was no change in daily routine even when the emperor was out of the capital.

During the early part of Akbar's reign Bairam Khan was the *Vakil* or Prime Minister. The post, though not abolished after Bairam's dismissal, ceased to have any real power. In actual fact Akbar ruled his empire with the help of four ministers: the *Dewan*, in charge of revenue and finance; the *Mir Bakshi*, in charge of the army; the *Mir Saman*, in charge of Government factories and stores; and the *Sadr*, who looked after religious and judicial affairs and charity. The ministers held their posts at the pleasure of the emperor and worked under his direction.

The power and influence of other high officials of the court put further limits on the power and sphere of activity of the ministers.

Of such high officials two deserve particular mention: the *Daroga-i-Ghusal Khana* (private secretary to the emperor) and the *Arz-i-Mukarrar* (who recorded the orders of the emperor). The *Daroga-i-Dakchouki* headed the espionage system. His department collected intelligence reports from all parts of the empire. The *Mir Arz* dealt with petitions. The routine that Akbar succeeded in establishing in his system of administration was followed by his successors. Any breach of this was met with the remark, "This is not the custom."

The Mughal empire was founded and preserved by force of arms. It, therefore, rested primarily on military power. The civil administration was organised on military lines and the

officials were liable to render military service. All high officials were required to furnish a specified number of soldiers in the Mughal army. Their rank and remuneration depended on the number of soldiers thus supplied. This was known as the *Mansabdari* system. During Akbar's reign there were 33 grades of *Mansabdars*. The highest grades (10,000 ; 8,000 ; 7,000) were reserved for the three royal princes. There were 1,388 *Mansabdars* with from 10 to 150 soldiers and 412 with from 200 to 5,000 soldiers. During Akbar's time those who had at least 200 soldiers were entitled to the rank of *Amir*. The chief among them had the title *Amir-ul Umara*. The *Mansabdars* raised the troops they commanded. In actual practice many of them raised less than the number of troops required for their grade. That is why Akbar introduced double ranks among the *Mansabdars* : the *Zat* and the *Sowar*, i.e., personal rank and rank depending on the number of soldiers actually raised. The *Zats* naturally outnumbered the *Sowars*. Akbar was in favour of remunerating the *Mansabdars* in cash rather than through grant of land. Their pay was very high. A *Mansabdar* of 5,000 received a monthly salary of not less than 18,000 rupees. Shah Jahan reformed the system and reduced the salary of the *Mansabdars*.

There were many reforms in the revenue system during Akbar's reign. In this matter his chief adviser was Todar Mal. After the revenue reforms of Todar Mal there were three principal revenue systems : (1) In Kabul, Kashmir and parts of Sind, a share of each crop was taken by the State (*Ghallabaksh*). (2) The system that was prevalent all over North India except Bengal was known as *Zabt*. The cultivable land was divided into four categories according to productive capacity. Only land actually cultivated was taxed. There was, therefore, a system of land-survey in order to find out the area under cultivation each time. Akbar demanded one-third of each crop produced. The cash prices of crops produced were assessed and a fixed part of the same taken as royal revenues. (3) The system which prevailed in Bengal

was known as *Nasaq*. Here Todar Mal had not the time to conduct land-survey. He estimated the royal dues on the basis of the old papers relating to revenue. This system was somewhat similar to the Zamindari system.

Like Sher Shah, Akbar was a just ruler and ensured that the subjects were not denied justice in any way. The emperor himself administered justice in some cases. He tried cases brought before him directly as also cases of appeal against judgments of lower courts. Usually criminal cases were brought before the emperor's court.

System of
justice

The minister known as *Sadr* was in charge of the judiciary. The provincial governors and the provincial *Dewans* tried criminal and civil cases respectively. A sentence of death was subject to confirmation by the emperor. The *Qazi* mainly decided cases coming under the *Shariat* or Islamic Law ; the *Muftis* explained the laws and customs of Islam for their convenience. The emperor himself appointed the Chief *Qazi*, who, in turn, appointed the subordinate *Qazis* subject to approval by the emperor. *Qazis* were appointed not only for cities, but also for smaller units. In the village there was the *Panchayet* system. Disputes relating to marriage, inheritance etc. in the case of Hindus were decided according to Hindu laws and customs.

Akbar's empire was divided into 15 *Subahs* or provinces :—

(1) Kabul ; (2) Lahore (Punjab and Kashmir) ; (3) Multan (including Sind) ; (4) Delhi ; (5) Agra ; (6) Oudh ; (7) Allahabad ; (8) Ajmer ; (9) Ahmedabad (Gujarat) ; (10) Malwa ; (11) Bihar ; (12) Bengal (including Orissa) ; (13) Khandesh ; (14) Berar ; (15) Ahmednagar. Every *Subah* was divided into several *Sarkars* or districts. The provincial governor was known as *Sipahsalar* : the titles *Nazim* and *Subahdar* were also current. His duty was to administer the province entrusted to him and keep order. He also tried criminal cases. Every province had a *Dewan*, who looked after the revenue department and also tried civil cases. The *Faujdar* was in charge of district (*Sarkar*) administration.

Provincial
administration

He tried criminal cases and supervised the police department. In large cities law and order was maintained by an official known as *Kotwal*. Every province had high officials like *Sadr* (in charge of religious and charitable affairs), *Amin* (in charge of collection of revenues), *Bitikchi* (in charge of maintenance of revenue accounts), *Waquianabis* (in charge of intelligence reports), etc.

In various ways the central government exercised effective control over the provincial units. No *Subahdar* was kept in charge of any particular *Subah* for a long period; thus they were not allowed the time to build up personal influence in any particular *Subah*. Secondly, in the provinces there was dual control of the *Subahdar* and the *Dewan*, each exercising a restraining influence on the other. Thirdly, there was an efficient system for collection of intelligence reports in regard to internal condition in the *Subahs*. The *Daroga-i-Dakhouki* kept the emperor regularly posted with necessary intelligence. Any sign of defiance of the emperor at any place was immediately tackled. As a result, till the reign of Aurangzeb, the central authority was able to keep a firm grip over the provinces.

Administrative system under the Mughals : Akbar's successors : The emperors succeeding Akbar did not introduce any fundamental reforms in the administrative system. Under

Aurangzeb the Mughal empire was divided into 21 *Subahs* : (1) Kabul; (2) Lahore; (3) Kashmir; (4) Multan; (5) Thatta (Sind); (6) Delhi; (7) Agra; (8) Oudh; (9) Allahabad; (10) Ajmer; (11) Malwa; (12) Ahmedabad; (13) Bihar; (14) Bengal; (15) Orissa; (16) Khandesh; (17) Berar; (18) Aurangabad; (19) Bidar; (20) Bijapur; (21) Hyderabad.

There were some changes in the revenue system during the reign of Aurangzeb. Usually a lump sum was demanded from one village or a large unit. If the local people did not agree to such an arrangement, revenue was assessed as per the system introduced by Akbar. When Aurangzeb was the *Subahdar* of the Deccan, Murshid Quli Khan was his *Dewan*. He introduced

the revenue system of Todar Mal in the Mughal provinces in the Deccan. During the closing years of Murshid Quli Khan Aurangzeb's reign he was made the *Dewan* of Bengal. Later, he became the *Subahdar* of Bengal. He introduced various reforms in the revenue system in Bengal.

Military system under the Mughals : The Mughal military structure was based on the *Mansabdari* system. Besides the troops collected by the *Mansabdars* there were *Dakhili* soldiers, who received their salary from the royal treasury but were under the command of the *Mansabdars*. There was a class of horsemen who hailed from good families and were known as *Ahadi*. They were not commanded by the *Mansabdars*, but were attached to the private armies of the nobility. Taken all in all, a majority of the soldiers in the Mughal army were those supplied by the *Mansabdars*.

The army organisation was extremely lax. The horsemen rode their own horses. If a horse was wounded or killed while a battle was on, it was the personal loss of the soldier riding it. It was not, therefore, surprising that he should try to desert from the battlefield in order to save his horse. The efficiency of the Mughal army was affected by lack of discipline and order, mismanagement of supplies, a life of ease and luxury in the camp, shortage of improved weapons and a host of other reasons.

The Mughal army comprised Turkish, Afghan, Rajput and Hindustani soldiers. They had no faith in each other nor did their political interests tally. The generals were not always as loyal to the emperor as they were expected to be. Many of them suffered reverses on account of their poor strategy. They were accustomed to live a life of comfort and luxury and have been described as "pale men in Muslin skirts". The reverses in Kandahar and Central Asia attest to the weakness of the Mughal military system.

Foreign travellers : The European merchants who arrived in India in the 17th century in search of commerce established themselves in many places. Some of them have left accounts of social and economic conditions prevailing in India at that period.

They form very valuable materials for reconstruction of the history of the Mughal period.

Among the notable foreign travellers were two Englishmen, William Hawkins and Sir Thomas Roe. Both of them visited India during the reign of Jahangir. Hawkins was amazed at the riches of the Mughal emperor and the splendour of his court. His account gives us valuable data about the economic aspect of the *Mansabdari* system. Sir Thomas Roe came to India as the envoy of King James I of England. His account is an important source of information about the reign of Jahangir. He has stated that the emperor occupied the seat of a judge once a week, listened to the complaints of his subjects and punished the guilty. According to Roe, the income of Jahangir exceeded that of the Persian and Turkish rulers. He found nothing to admire in the provincial governors and refers time and again to instances of their acts of omission and commission.

That the officials oppressed the people has also been mentioned in the account of the Dutch trader, Palslaert. He has stated that in spite of the immense fertility of the Indian soil, agricultural production did not come up to the expected standard due to the oppression of the revenue-collecting officials. The wages of the labourers amounted to very little and they were victims of oppression in various forms on the part of the high officials. Their diet and living quarters were shocking. The shop-keepers were compelled to sell commodities to the officials at half the usual prices. Bengal produced silk and cotton in plenty.

During the reign of Shah Jahan two Frenchmen Tavernier, a merchant, and Bernier, a physician, visited India. Tavernier has referred to the silk industry of Bengal and admired the emperor's jewels. From the viewpoint of the historian his account is particularly valuable. Bernier lived in this country during the first ten years of Aurangzeb's reign. He has stated that large tracts of land used to lie fallow for want of cultivators. Bernier has also referred to the oppression of the peasants by the

provincial governors and officials. He has mentioned the lavishness of the Mughal empire and remarked that gold and silver flowed to India from other parts of the world. He was amazed at the riches of Bengal. This province used to produce huge quantities of rice which went to meet the needs of distant lands. Besides rice,

Reign of
Aurangzeb

Bengal also produced sugar, cotton and silk in abundance. There was a proverb among the foreigners of the period to the effect that while Bengal had many entrances, it had no exit. Manucci, an Italian traveller, lived for a long period in India during the reign of Aurangzeb. His book provides materials relating to that period. But his account must be treated with due caution, as he recorded various bazar-gossips without caring to verify their accuracy.

Society under the Mughals : In the Mughal period the elite, following the emperor, wallowed in luxury. But many of them were patrons of art, literature and education. In general, the level of culture of the aristocracy in the Mughal period was quite high. But they used to be extremely lavish in their

The elite expenses, as they had no stake in accumulating money. If a member of the aristocracy died, the state forfeited his property. Unless the emperor allowed it as a great favour, his successors could not inherit his property. So the aristocrats, with a view to enjoying the fruits of their labour in their own life time, spent quite recklessly. As a result, there was no accumulation of riches on the part of individuals under the Mughals. This prevented the rise of a powerful, rich and hereditary aristocracy which could act as a sort of brake on the absolute power of the emperor.

Towards the close of the Mughal period the aristocracy was in a state of decline. The aristocracy which achieved so much in the spheres of warfare and administration in the 16th and 17th centuries became quite barren in the 18th century.

The middle class could not obviously hope to have a share

in the luxury of the aristocracy. They had no abundance of food and dress. Among the middle classes only the *The middle class* businessmen were more or less well off, though the fear of the officials frequently led them to hide their income and live a very simple life.

The life of the common people was quite miserable. They had few dresses and could not afford woollen garments and shoes. However, except in times of famine, *The lower classes* they did not have to go without food. According to a European traveller, the lot of labourers, house-servants and shop-keepers was practically the same as that of the slaves. Towards the close of Shah Jahan's reign the oppression of the provincial governors had increased the misery of the peasants.

Though drinking was a common habit with the aristocracy, it was much less so with the middle class and the common people. Other notable features of the society were the practice of *Suttee*, child marriage, the dowry system and the system of fixing social status according to birth (Kulinism). Superstitions played an important role in society and religion.

Economic condition under the Mughals: Agriculture dominated the Mughal economy. The peasants cultivated their small plots. As there was no efficient irrigation and drainage system, excessive rainfall as well as drought affected agriculture. The cultivation of tobacco deserves particular mention. Cotton, silk and indigo were also in great demand.

In the Mughal period manufacture was organised in small units. As the Mughals had no navy to speak of, it was not possible for the Indian merchants to look out *Manufacture* for possible centres of business in foreign lands.

India's foreign trade was under the control of European traders. Saltpetre production in Bihar and iron production in Golkonda were the two important manufactures of the Mughal period. But the most notable feature of the age was the increased production of calico to meet the demand in the markets of western Europe. Bernier has stated that cotton and silk were so plenti-

ful in Bengal that it was regarded as the common storehouse, not only of the Mughal empire but also of the neighbouring lands and even of the European countries, in respect of these two products. Indian cotton, indigo and saltpetre were widely used in western Europe and Indian silk in Japan. The export trade of Bengal developed very rapidly. The chief ports of India at that period were Lahori Bandar (in Sind), Surat, Goa, Calicut, Cochin, Masulipatam, as also Satgaon, Sripur, Chittagong and Sonargaon in Bengal.

Contemporary travellers have referred to the low prices of foodstuffs in the Indian cities. They have attributed this to the fertility of the land. Tavernier says that even in the smallest of villages flour, sugar and sweetmeat were available in plenty. Manucci has written thus about Bengal: "All things are in great plenty here, fruits, pulse, grain, muslin, cloths of gold and silk". But in the opinion of a modern historian, foodstuffs were cheap because of the need "to provide the urban population with subsistence below cost."

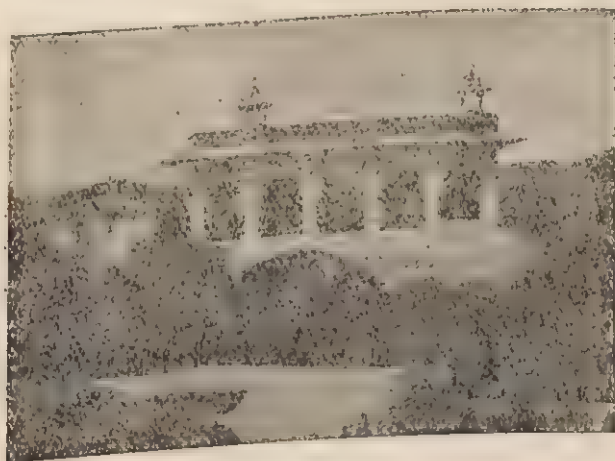
Architecture in Mughal period: The art of architecture developed magnificently under the patronage of the Mughal emperors. The Indo-Persian style which came into vogue during the Sultanate reached its climax under the Mughals. By imbibing the basic beauty and strength of the two opposed styles, Mughal architecture achieved a perfection of elegance.

Though Babur lived in India only for a few years, he built several palaces and mosques. Most of these are, however, now in ruins. The buildings put up under Humayun show distinct traces of Persian influence. Sher Shah's contributions to art have already been discussed.

A few years after Akbar had ascended the throne, his step-mother, Hazi Begam, built the famous tomb of Humayun at Delhi. This charming structure shows distinct traces of Persian and Central Asian ideas and styles of construction. Akbar built palace-forts at Agra, Lahore and Fathpur Sikri. Inside the palace-fort at Agra there were nearly 500 large buildings made of blood-red stone. Its main entrance, the

Delhi Darwaza (Gate), is considered the largest gateway in India. At Fathpur Sikri Akbar built a new city and transferred his capital there for some years (1569-1584 A.D.). Here the most impressive sight is the *Buland Darwaza* built to commemorate Akbar's conquest of Gujarat. Other notable constructions at Fathpur Sikri are the palace of Jodh Bai, *Jam-i-Masjid*, *Panchmahal* and the tomb of Salim Chisti. Hindu influence is very much in evidence in the palace of Jodh Bai. In between Fathpur Sikri and Agra lies Sikandra where Akbar's tomb still exists. Though it was built during the reign of Jahangir, it was probably a conception of Akbar himself. In describing Akbar's style of architecture Abul Fazl has stated, "His Majesty plans splendid edifices and dresses the work of his mind and heart in the garment of stone and clay".

Jahangir was himself a devotee of art and a skilful painter.



Palace of Shah Jahan
(Agra)

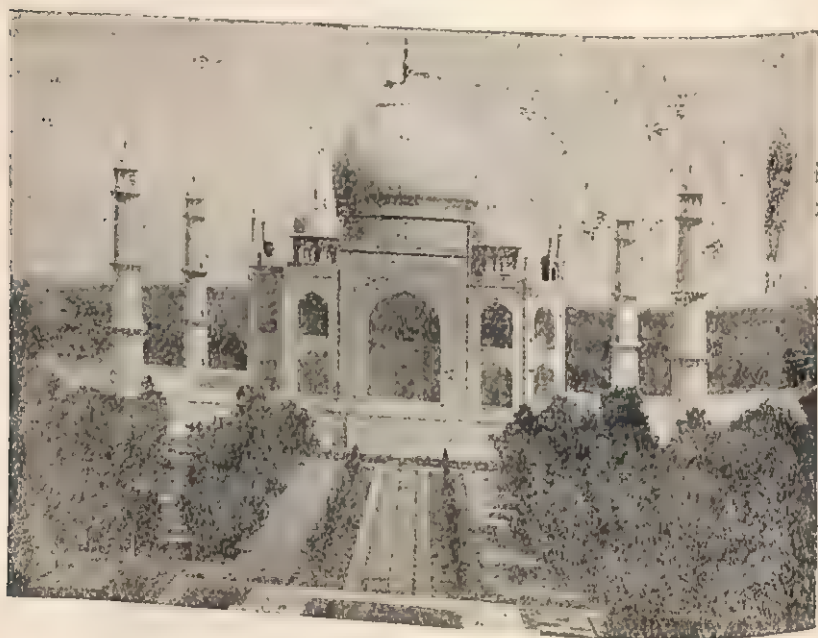
Nur Jahan built at Agra a large and novel edifice over the tomb of her father, Itmad-ud daula. It is quite a remarkable specimen of Mughal architecture. It not only exemplifies a refined taste, but stands as a sort of link between the simpler sand-

Reign of
Jahangir

stone construction of Akbar and Jahangir and the more splendid white marble structures of Shah Jahan.

Shah Jahan was a great lover of art, particularly architecture. His riches were immense. The French travellers, Tavernier and Bernier, were amazed at the elegance and grace of his constructions and the splendour of his court. His fascination for the splendid has become a byword in our country.

Mughal art rose to the pinnacle of its glory under Shah Jahan. Nearly all his constructions were of marble. He



Taj Mahal

demolished parts of the palace-forts built by Akbar at Agra and Lahore and raised new structures. This is particularly in evidence in the palace-fort of Agra. The Architecture under Shah Jahan exquisitely beautiful marble edifices like the *Diwan-i-Am*, the *Diwan-i-Khas*, the *Khas Mahal*, the *Shish Mahal*, the *Moti Masjid* etc. continue to haunt the imagination long after a visitor has left the place. All these we owe to Shah Jahan. At Delhi on the banks of the

Jumna Shah Jahan founded a new city, Shahjahanabad. Here inside the palace-fort are such impressive structures as the *Diwan-i-Am* and *Diwan-i-Khas*. On the walls of the *Diwan-i-Khas* are inscribed the words, "If there is a paradise on earth it is this, it is this". Near the fort is the famous *Jam-i-Masjid*. About the splendid constructions of Shah Jahan an historian of those times has remarked, "Lovely things reached the zenith of perfection".

The greatest achievement of Shah Jahan is, of course, the Taj Mahal. This dream in marble is the result of the combined efforts of numerous Indian and foreign masters of art and architecture. It was built in memory of Mumtazmahal, the wife to whom Shah Jahan was so devoted. It cost fifty lakhs of rupees and took twenty-one years to build. It appears from the writings of contemporary authors that great artists from Samarkand, Bukhara, Siraj, Baghdad and Constantinople came to India at the invitation of Shah Jahan to take part in building this imperishable monument. While Muslim artists were entrusted with the work of construction, their Hindu counter-parts put in the decorative touches. Thus the Taj Mahal is the symbol of a unique fusion of Hindu and Persian styles. The master-builder of Siraj, Isha, was in charge of construction.

Decline of Mughal art under Aurangzeb Mughal art stagnated during the reign of Aurangzeb for lack of patronage on the part of the emperor. He did not put up a single structure which can draw the admiration of art-lovers.

Painting in the Mughal period: Akbar's reign marked a new age in the history of painting in India. Frescoes in walls are the common expressions of Mughal painting. Among the artists gathering round Akbar at Fatehpur Sikri the more notable were Abdus Samad, a Persian, and two Indians, Daswanath and Basawan. As in architecture, so also in painting there was a fusion of Persian and Indian styles. Jahangir was a dilettante in painting. Aga Reza of Herat, Muhammad Nadir of Samarkand were among the chief artists during Jahangir's reign. Shah Jahan was more a lover of architecture than of painting. The

artists in the Mughal court showed particular skill in depicting vividly such exciting scenes as battles, hunters chasing their victims etc. In Mughal art it is the sensuous and sportive motives which predominate.

The patronage of the Rajput rulers gave rise to a particular school of art. While the themes were based on the life of the common people and Hindu mythology, the style betrayed a Persian approach. In the hilly frontiers of the Punjab, particularly in the Kangra Valley, another style developed. This has come to be known as the Kangra school of painting.

Rajput and
Kangra styles of
painting

Peacock Throne and Kohinoor : In a description of the riches of Shah Jahan the Peacock Throne and the Kohinoor diamond deserve special mention. It took seven long years for many artists under the general supervision of Behadal Khan to build this famous throne. Its four stands were golden. Twelve miniature pillars studded with gems supported a covering over the head. On each such pillar were carved two peacocks inlaid with bright gems. In between the peacocks were miniature trees studded with precious stones. This unique throne was taken away to Persia by Nadir Shah at the time of his Indian invasion (1739 A.D.). Shah Jahan attached the Kohinoor diamond to his head-dress. Nadir Shah took away this diamond also as his booty.

Literature : Babur wrote a very pleasant-reading autobiography in the Turki language. His Persian verses have no small literary merit. His daughter, Gulbadan Begum, wrote a history of Humayun's reign in Persian.

Akbar, though unlettered himself, was a patron of learning. His favourite companion and adviser, Abul Fazl, was a great scholar. His two works, *Ain-i-Akbari* and *Akbarnama*, are two priceless treasures of historical literature and the best sources for the history of Akbar's reign. Faizi, the elder brother of Abul Fazl, was a famous poet. Under the patronage of Akbar, the *Atharva Veda*, the *Mahabharata*, the *Ramayana* and the work on mathematics, *Lilavati*, were translated from Sanskrit to Persian. Two other important

Persian Literature

Historians of Akbar's reign were Nizam-ud-din and Badauni, each of whom had a valuable work to his credit. Birbal, a member of Akbar's court, composed sweet verses in Hindi. The famous Hindi poets, Tulsidas and Surdas, presented their epic verse-compositions during the reign of Akbar.

Under Jahangir and Shah Jahan some important historical works were written in Persian. In this connection we may refer to Jahangir's autobiography. Dara wrote some books in Persian on religious themes. Under his patronage some of the *Upanishads* were translated into Persian from Sanskrit. Jahanara, the daughter of Shah Jahan, and Zeb-un-nesa, the daughter of Aurangzeb, composed sweet verses in Persian.

Though Aurangzeb was no lover of literature, he was the patron of the famous work on Muslim Law, *Fatwa-i-Alamgiri*. As he forbade writing of history, a historian named Muhammad Hasim wrote a famous work on history under the assumed name of 'Khafi Khan'.

It is not only the Persian language and its literature which were cultivated during the Mughal period. The greatest work of Hindi literature, *Rama-Charita-Manasa*, was composed during the reign of Akbar. Among those who belonged to Akbar's court Birbal, Bhagwandas, Todar Mal, Man Singh,

Development of
different Indian
languages

Abdur Rahim Khan Khana and others composed Hindi poems. The Urdu language was very popular in South India. The greatest Urdu poet of South India was Wali. Tukaram's *Abhangas* (devotional songs) and the compositions of Ramdas enriched Marathi literature. Two fine works of Bengali literature—*Chandimangala* of Kavikankan Mukundaram and *Mahabharata* of Kashiram Das—were composed in the Mughal period. The *Padavalis* of the Vaishnavas and the songs in verse on the theme of Sri Chaitanya's life made the Bengali literature of the age particularly rich. Under the Mughals the Gurmukhi script was invented in the Punjab and the *Granth Sahib* and the works of Guru Gobind were written.

Model Questions :

1. Give a brief account of Mughal administration.
2. Describe social and economic conditions in Mughal India.
3. What do foreign travellers tell us about Mughal India?
4. What do you know about progress of art and literature during the Mughal period?

PART THREE

CHAPTER 24

European Merchants in India

Coming of European merchants : Arab merchants used to buy Indian merchandise and export these at very high prices to Venice, Genoa and other ports on the Mediterranean. Italian merchants carried these products to all parts of Europe. As this profitable trade was a monopoly of the Arab and Italian merchants, merchants of other countries became jealous and eager to open their own trade channels with India. For various reasons it was extremely difficult to reach India by the overland route. Attempts were, therefore, made to find out a passage over the seas. Towards the close of the 15th century Bartholomew Diaz, a Portuguese navigator, rounded the southern coasts of Africa. Due to lack of correct geographical information Columbus, who sailed to find out a passage to India, discovered America instead. In 1498 Vasco da Gama, a Portuguese navigator, rounded the Cape of Good Hope on the southern tip of Africa and arrived at the port of Calicut on the western coast of India. Later, Dutch, English, French, Danish and other ships came to India by this route at different times. Before the opening of the Suez Canal in the second half of the 19th century European ships used to visit India by this route.

The Portuguese in India : After the exploratory visit of Vasco da Gama the Portuguese began their commercial activities in India under the patronage, and with the encouragement, of the King of Portugal. In 1500 A.D. Cabral reached Calicut and established a factory there. After this, between 1509 and 1515, Albuquerque made the Portuguese masters of the Indian Ocean and established Portuguese rule in some coastal regions of India. He captured Goa after defeating the Sultan of

Monopoly of
Arab and
Italian
merchants

Vasco da
Gama

Portuguese
mastery over
Indian
Ocean

Bijapur and increased its commercial and strategic importance by making it well-fortified. From then on Goa became the main base of the Portuguese in the East.

Gradually Bassein and Diu fell into the hands of the Portuguese. They established factories at Chaul, Bombay, Bassein, Salsette, Goa, Daman and Diu on the western coast and Hughli in Bengal. But the Portuguese never tried to penetrate deeper into India. They did not establish their rule in any place not within the range of the guns of their ships. In the 17th century their colonies in India fell one by one into the hands of their rivals, the Dutch. In 1739 the Marathas captured Salsette and Bassein. Portuguese rule then remained confined to Goa, Daman and Diu.

The Dutch in India : In 1602 the Dutch formed a Company for trading in the East. In the first half of the 17th century Dutch factories were established at Calicut and Surat on the western coast of India. But they were more keen to trade with the East Indies than with India. Trade in pepper and spices from Sumatra, Java and the Moluccas were fabulously profitable. In order to enjoy a monopoly of this trade the Dutch ousted their rivals, the Portuguese and the English, from the East Indies. Later, with a view to extending their commerce to western India and establish their authority there, the Dutch drove away the Portuguese from Malabar. Quilon, Cranganore and Cochin fell into their hands. Negapatam became the headquarters of the Dutch in India. During the early years of the beginning of English mastery over India, the Dutch were defeated by Clive in the battle of Biderra (1759). In 1781 Negapatam fell to the English.

The English East India Company : On the 31st December, 1600, Queen Elizabeth of England gave an English Company formed by 218 English merchants the formal right to a monopoly of trade in the East (*i. e.*, any other merchant or Company of England carrying on such trade in the East was to be liable for punishment in England). In history it is generally known as the 'East India Company.'

In 1613 the Mughal emperor Jahangir permitted the English to establish a permanent factory at Surat.

At this time, King James I of England sent an envoy, Sir Thomas Roe, to the court of Jahangir for obtaining trading facilities for the East India Company. Though he was in the Mughal court for three years, he was not given any trading concessions in Bengal and Sind. However, the English were permitted to trade in Gujarat. English factories were established at Broach, Ahmedabad and Agra. All these were under the authority of the chief at Surat.

The English
on the western
coast

Meanwhile, the English were extending their trade on the eastern coast. In 1611 they established a factory at Masulipatam in the Sultanate of Golkonda. Some years later another factory was established at Armagaon, north of Pulicat. In 1639 they rented land from the Raja of Chandragiri and established a settlement named Fort St. George at a place now known as Madras. Gradually Masulipatam lost in importance and Madras on the Coromondel coast became the head-quarters of the English.

The English on
the Coromondel
coast

In order to secure silk, calico, sugar and saltpetre from Bengal the English set up factories at Hughli in 1651 and later at Patna and Cossimbazar. Such factories had already been established at Hariharpur and Baleswar in Orissa. Gradually, due to a number of reasons, the sphere of English trade moved from the western to the eastern regions of India. The factories in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and the Coromondel coast were subordinate to Madras.

The English in
Bengal

Towards the close of the 17th century, in the reign of Aurangzeb, disputes arose between the English merchants and the Mughal authorities in Bengal over the question of customs duties. The English built a fort at Hughli for self-defence, but were driven out from there by the Mughal army. When the English seized ships laden with Muslim pilgrims in the Arabian Sea, the

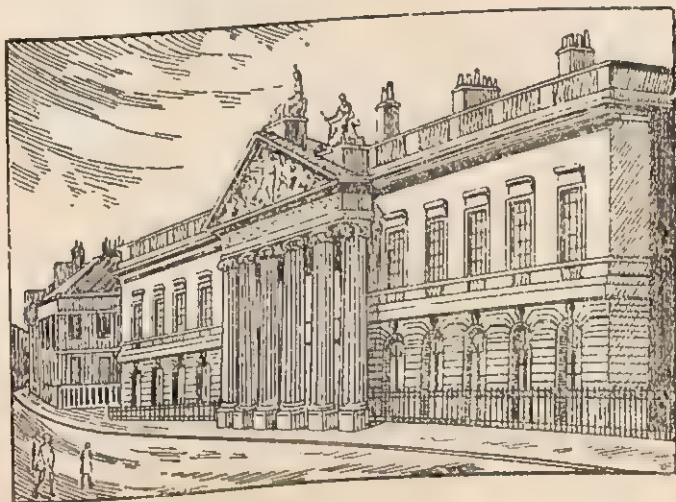
Disputes with the
Mughals

Mughals besieged Bombay. In 1690 the English entered into a treaty with the Mughals. After their expulsion from Hughli the English of Bengal had withdrawn from Bengal to Madras. Now with the conclusion of this treaty they returned to Bengal. Job Charnock, their leader, laid the foundation of Calcutta at what was then a village called Sutanuti on the banks of the Ganges. In 1698 the English secured the rights of zamindari over the three

Foundation of
Calcutta

villages—Sutanuti, Calcutta and Govindapur—and built a fort called the Fort William, named after William III, the then King of England. Two years later, like Bombay and Madras, Calcutta also became a Presidency. These three places were known as Presidencies because each was under the authority of a President.

Sometime after this John Surman, an envoy of the English Company, arrived at the Mughal court in Delhi and secured considerable trading facilities (1717). The English were given the right to duty-free trade in Bengal in return for the payment of the paltry sum of Rs. 3,000 per annum.



India House, London

French commercial interests in India : The French East India Company was set up in 1664 for carrying on trade with

India. The Company established factories at Surat on the western coast in 1668 and Masulipatam on the eastern coast in 1669. In 1673 Pondicherry was founded 82 miles south of Madras and it began to flourish gradually. In 1674 the French secured Chandernagore from the Nawab of Bengal, Shaista Khan, and set up factories there a few years later (1690-1692). In 1725 Mahe, on the Malabar coast, and in 1739 Karikal on the Coromandel coast became centres of French trade.

Nawabs of Murshidabad : The authority of the Mughal emperor was firm over Bengal till the reign of Aurangzeb. He had appointed Murshid Quli Khan Dewan of Bengal. After the death of Aurangzeb Murshid Quli began to rule Bengal independently. During his rule the capital of Bengal was transferred from Dacca to Murshidabad. After the death of Murshid Quli Khan in 1727, his son-in-law, Shuja-ud-din, became the Subahdar of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. His son, Sarfaraz Khan, succeeded him on his death in 1736. In 1740 Sarfaraz was defeated and killed at the battle of Giria by Alivardi Khan, the deputy governor of Bihar. Alivardi was recognized by the Mughal emperor as the viceroy of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. During his tenure West Bengal was ravaged by the Bargis. The soldiers of the Maratha ruler of Nagpur, Raghuji Bhonsle, were known as Bargis in Bengal. It is a distortion of the word 'Bargir'. Between 1742 and 1751 the Marathas raided Bengal several times. Alivardi was unable to resist their incursions even though he fought them for a long period. At last he had no alternative but to buy off the Marathas by ceding the Cuttack region of Orissa to Raghuji and also promising to pay him Rs. 22 lakhs annually as *Chouth* (one-fourth of revenue).

Anglo-French rivalry in the Deccan : During the 18th century the clash of commercial interest between the English and the French in India gradually developed into a long struggle for the establishment of political dominion in the country.

In 1740 the War of Austrian Succession began in Europe. In this war England and France joined the two opposing sides. In 1746 this war had its impact in India when the English and the French fought it out. This is known in history as the First Anglo-French War or the First Carnatic War (1746-68). Dupleix was then the French Governor of Pondicherry. He resolved to establish a French empire by taking advantage of the political instability in the country. As the French in India had no navy, he asked La Bourdonnais, the French Governor of the island of Mauritius, to come to India with his navy. La Bourdonnais had already made Mauritius a powerful base of the French in the Indian Ocean. In 1746 he arrived in India with his navy, defeated the English and captured Madras. This displeased Anwar-ud-din, the Nawab of the Carnatic, for Madras was within his territory and the French had occupied it without his consent. But his army of ten thousand met defeat at the hands of only five hundred French soldiers

First Carnatic
War

when they clashed at Mailapur near Madras. This proved that soldiers trained in the western techniques could easily defeat those trained in Indian techniques. In 1748 the English attacked Pondicherry, but were defeated by Dupleix. But before Dupleix could succeed in his plan, the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle in Europe established peace between England and France (1748). So the English and the French in India also concluded a treaty. The French returned Madras to the English. For the present none gained, but the conditions were favourable for translating Dupleix's dream of an Indian empire into a reality.

Just at this time rival claimants appeared for the rulerships of Hyderabad and Arcot. Arcot was the capital of the Nawab of the Carnatic. Chanda Sahib, the son-in-law of the former Nawab of the Carnatic, was claiming Arcot as a rival of Anwar-ud-din, the reigning Nawab. Again, after the death of the Nizam of Hyderabad in 1748, his second son, Nasir Jang, succeeded him, but Nasir Jang's claim was disputed by his nephew, Muzaffar Jang. Dupleix sided with Chanda Sahib and Muzaffar

Succession dis-
putes at Arcot
and Hyderabad

Jang, the English with Anwar-ud-din and Nasir Jang. Thus began the Second Anglo-French War or the Second Anglo-French War or the Second Carnatic War (1751-54) in the Deccan.

Victory at first favoured the French. In 1746 Anwar-ud-din was defeated and killed. His son, Muhammad Ali, took shelter at Trichinopoly and there made preparations for resisting Chanda Sahib and the French with the help of the English. In 1750 Nasir Jang was assassinated at the instance of Dupleix and Mazaffar Jang became the ruler of Hyderabad. He showed his gratitude to the French by surrendering to them a large portion of his coastal territory, including Masulipatam. The French general, Bussy, reached Hyderabad at the head of a large army. In 1751 Muzaffar Jang met with death at the hands of an assassin. Then Bussy placed Salabat Jang, the third son of Nizam-ul-Mulk, on the throne of Hyderabad. In order to meet the expenses of his army, Bussy was granted four districts. By staying there with his army till 1758, Bussy kept French influence intact in Hyderabad. Meanwhile, Chanda Sahib, the ally of the French, had besieged Muhammad Ali, the ally of the English, at Trichinopoly. The English influence in the Deccan was on the point of total collapse.

In these dark days for the English Robert Clive appeared on the scene to swing the situation in their favour. In 1742 he had come to Madras as a clerk of the East India Company. Within a short period, however, he had given up his civil employment and entered the army. When the repeated successes of the French made the position of the English very insecure, Clive, with only 500 soldiers, captured Arcot, the capital of Chanda Sahib. This was the single greatest military achievement of the Carnatic War. Next, Clive defeated the combined forces of Dupleix and Chanda Sahib, broke the siege of Trichinopoly, rescued Muhammad Ali and placed him on the throne of Arcot (1752). Chanda Sahib was beheaded. The French influence over Arcot was replaced by that of the English. Dupleix continued the war for

two more years and then returned to France under the orders of the French authorities (1754). After this, there was a treaty between the English and the French, both the sides retaining their authority in their respective territories. Taken all in all, this war led to the establishment of French authority in Hyderabad and that of the English in the Carnatic.

Two years after Dupleix returned to France the Third Anglo-French War or the Third Carnatic War (1756-63) broke out in India. The Seven Years' War (1756-63) had begun in Europe in the same year. As in the War of Austrian Succession, in this

war also the English and the French had joined different sides ; naturally war now broke out between the two in India also. As soon as

Third Carnatic War

the news of the war in Europe reached India, the English captured Chandernagar from the French (1757).

After the fall of Siraj-ud-daula (1757) the English had become dominant in Bengal. In 1758 a full-scale war began between the English and the French in the Deccan. Count de Lally was sent from France to take charge of the French operations in India. He besieged Madras, but failed to take it. As he brought Bussy from Hyderabad to the Carnatic to help him storm Madras, the French lost their hold over Hyderabad. The forces which Bussy had left stationed in the Northern Sarkars (the region lying on the coast of the Bay of Bengal in Andhra Pradesh) were defeated by the English general, Colonel Forde, in 1758. The French navy was defeated near Pondicherry. The English authority was established over the entire Coromandel coast. In 1760 Lally had to accept total defeat at the hands of Sir Eyre Coote, the English general, in the battle of Wandiwash. The English next captured Pondicherry and took Lally a prisoner.

In 1763 the Peace of Paris brought the Seven Years' War in Europe to an end. In India also, the English and the French made peace. The French territories, which the English had occupied, were returned to them. But the French were no longer in a position, both as regards strength and opportunity, to be a challenge to the English in India. The English were

now free to extend commerce and build up an empire in India. The great future which Dupleix had dreamed for the French in the East failed to materialise. The indifference of the French Government in maintaining French authority in India, the French Company's lack of finances and the predominance of the English navy on the seas—these are the three main reasons which shattered the French dream in India.

The English in Bengal: Siraj-ud-daula: The fate of Bengal was mixed up with the Anglo-French rivalry in the Deccan: Alivardi Khan died in 1756 and his grandson and great-nephew, Siraj-ud-daula, became the Subahdar of Bengal (1756-57). The new Nawab was young, restless in spirit, and oppressive.

A conflict between Siraj and the English became inevitable due to a variety of causes. Though Alivardi, who had no male issue, had nominated Siraj as his successor, Ghasiti Begam (his elder daughter) and Shaukat Jang (the ruler of Purnea, the son of another daughter of Alivardi) had conspired against this arrangement even during the life-time of the old Nawab. The chief adviser of Ghasiti Begam was Raja Rajballabh, a prominent official in the Nawab's service, who had connections with the English. Naturally Siraj was hostile to them after he became the Nawab. Secondly, the English had begun to rebuild Fort William against the orders of Alivardi. After becoming the Nawab, Siraj commanded the English to demolish the newly built portion of the fort. The English did not comply with this order. Thirdly a son of Raja Rajballabh, Krishnadas, who was in the service of the Nawab, had offended him and taken shelter in Calcutta. Siraj was very angry with the English for giving shelter to Krishnadas. They disregarded his order to surrender Krishnadas to him.

For all these reasons Siraj first imprisoned Ghasiti Begam and then attacked and captured Calcutta in June, 1756. It is stated that a majority of 146 English prisoners, whom Siraj

had kept confined in a small room in Calcutta, died of suffocation. English historians refer to this event as the Black Hole Tragedy. As a result of recent research, we have reasons to doubt if there was any such incident at all. Even if the story is true Siraj cannot be held personally responsible for it ; it is his subordinates who are to be blamed for the tragedy, if there was any. Anyway, shortly after this Siraj defeated and killed Shaukat Jang. Meanwhile, hearing the news of the occupation of Calcutta by the Nawab, Clive and Watson, a naval commander, arrived in Bengal with forces and some war-vessels and recovered Calcutta (January, 1757). By the treaty of Alinagar (February, 1757) Siraj recognised the right of the English to build forts and circulate coins ; he also agreed to continue the facilities which the English had been enjoying so long. The fruits of Siraj's victory in Calcutta were thus lost altogether.

Though the treaty was very favourable to the English, it did not last long. As soon as the Third Carnatic War began, Clive and Watson drove out the French and captured Chander-nagar (March, 1757). Though he promised to do so, Siraj did not come to the help of the French. However, he allowed shelter to the French at Murshidabad after the fall of Chander-nagar. The Anglo-French War in the Deccan was going on. If at this critical juncture the Nawab of Bengal became an ally of the French, the English were likely to be exposed to many dangers. Clive realised that so long as Siraj remained the Nawab of Bengal, English interests would not be safe there.

On the other hand, the rude behaviour of Siraj had led some prominent men of Bengal to conspire for his overthrow. Of them, Jagat Seth, the famous banker, Mir Jafar, the Nawab's general, and Raja Rajballabh deserve special mention. Clive joined them. It was arranged to replace Siraj by Mir Jafar. To make the conspiracy a success, Clive practised fraud on Umi Chand, a Sikh merchant, by forging the signature of Watson.

The conspiracy achieved its final success at the battlefield of Plassey (23rd June, 1757). Siraj was defeated as a result of

Conspiracy
against Siraj

the betrayal of Mir Jafar. Clive rewarded Mir Jafar for his services by making him the new Nawab of Bengal. Siraj was captured by Miran, the son of Mir Jafar, and put to a cruel death. Plassey was the prelude to complete English mastery over Bengal. With the resources of this rich province at their disposal, the English won their war against the French in the Deccan. The establishment of the British empire in India is an indirect result of the battle of Plassey.

Battle of
Plassey

Mir Jafar (1757-1760) : After the battle of Plassey Mir Jafar remained Nawab for three years. But he was Nawab only in name ; it is the English who really dictated policy in all matters. Clive, who was appointed Governor by the Company in 1758, was the real ruler of Bengal. Mir Jafar gave Clive immense sums of money and a vast *Jagir*. Other officials of the Company also reaped substantial financial benefits. The Company was given the right of zamindari over the district of 24 Parganas. In 1759 Ali Gahar (later Shah Alam II), the second son of the puppet Mughal emperor, attacked Bihar. Mir Jafar could not resist him due to military weakness and it is Clive who actually saved Mir Jafar's domains by resisting the attack of Ali Gahar. Angry with the English for dictating to him in everything, Mir Jafar probably entered into a conspiracy with the Dutch of Hughli with a view to driving out the English. But in 1759 Clive defeated the Dutch in an encounter at Biderra.

Clive returned to England in 1760 and Vansittart was made the Governor of Calcutta. When Mir Jafar failed to meet the Company's demand for finances, the English deposed him and made his son-in-law, Mir Qasim, the new Nawab. The political skill and the military might of the English thus enabled them to cause revolutionary changes in Bengal twice within a period of three years.

Deposition of
Mir Jafar

Mir Qasim (1760-1764) : On becoming Nawab Mir Qasim gave the East India Company the right to zamindari of three districts : Burdwan, Midnapore and Chittagong. Again, the

Governor and the top English officials received liberal monetary rewards. But Mir Qasim was not prepared to kowtow to the English for ever. A conflict with them was, therefore, inevitable. In fact the English were tightening their grip over Bengal politically and militarily so rapidly that no Nawab could rule even with a semblance of independence. Finding the English lording it over at Murshidabad because it was so near Calcutta, Mir Qasim transferred his capital to distant Monghyr. Within a short period he introduced a number of administrative reforms and established discipline in the army. He tried to train his army in European techniques with the help of some foreign military experts in search of fortune. At last he directly clashed with the British over the question of customs duties.

Under the command of the emperor of Delhi the East India Company had been enjoying the right to duty-free trade in Bengal; but this privilege could not be extended to private trade carried on by the Company's officials. In those days

Dispute about
customs duties

the Company's servants who received a meagre pay supplemented their income with private trade for which they were required to pay the usual duties. After the battle of Plassey, however, they became conscious of their power and ceased to pay duties for their private trade. Even many of the Indian merchants who were in their favour carried on trade without paying duties. As a result those the Indian merchants who could not refuse to pay duties were victims of an unequal trade rivalry. Mir Qasim first tried to stop this evil practice with the co-operation of the English. When this bore no fruit he abolished customs duties altogether. This, no doubt, reduced the receipts in the Nawab's treasury, but the Indian merchants were now free from the unequal rivalry of the English officials as well as their local favourites. The English officials, deprived of their undue privilege, determined to oust Mir Qasim.

The Chief of the Company's factory at Patna, Ellis, tried to take that city by storm. Mir Qasim was forced to take the field openly against the English. Unfortunately, however,

he was repeatedly defeated. After his defeats at Katwa, Gheria and Udhanala (1763) Mir Qasim sought the help of the Nawab of Oudh, Shuja-ud-daula. The puppet emperor of Delhi, Shah Alam II, was then under the shelter of Shuja-ud-daula. He and Shuja-ud-daula then together advanced against the English in support of Mir Qasim. But on 22nd October, 1764, they were defeated at Buxar by the English general, Munro. Mir Qasim fled. After much suffering, he died in 1777.

In 1765 by the treaty of Allahabad Clive forced Shuja-ud-daula to pay 50 lakhs in cash and to cede Allahabad and Kora districts to the Company. Later, these two districts were given to Shah Alam who had joined the Company after the battle of Buxar. That battle brought Oudh under the influence of the Company and made emperor Shah Alam its pensioner. Indeed the battle of Buxar was the climax of the process begun at Plassey. After the fall of Mir Qasim the Nawabs of Bengal became mere figure-heads and the English appeared openly as real rulers.

Return of Clive: Increase in Company's power: Immediately after the beginning of their hostilities with Mir Qasim the English had restored Mir Jafar to power. He was succeeded on his death by his son, Najm-ud-daula, with the approval of the English. The new Nawab entered into a treaty with the English. He agreed to be protected by the Company's forces and the administration was placed in charge of a Deputy Nawab, Reza Khan, with the approval of the English. This arrangement made the Company the real power in Bengal by indirectly making it the arbiter of all administrative and military affairs. The Nawab was reduced to the status of a pensioner of the Company.

After the fall of Mir Qasim the authorities of the Company sent Clive again to this country in order to restore peace and order in Bengal. In 1765, in order to make the Company's authority firm and legal, Clive secured from the puppet emperor of Delhi, Shah Alam, a *firman* granting the East India Company

the **Dewani** of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The **Nizamat** remained with the Nawab as before. In return for the *firman* the Company gave Allahabad and Kora (secured from the Nawab of Oudh) to the emperor and also promised to pay him Rs. 26 lakhs annually.

This arrangement set up a Double Government in Bengal-Bihar-Orissa. The Company was now entitled to collect revenue and try civil cases. But the English did not take over these rights directly. Reza Khan in Bengal and Shitab Rai in Bihar represented the Company. The Nawab lost all powers in respect of revenue administration. Though the *firman* of Shah Alam had kept the **Nizamat** under the Nawab, in actual practice even in this sphere those trusted representatives of the Company, Reza Khan and Shitab Rai, became the controlling voice. The Nawab was powerless to control them and the Company was unwilling to interfere in their affairs. Thus they became irresponsible and began to serve their own interests, totally disregarding the welfare of the people. The misery of the people of Bengal knew no bounds.

Clive introduced some reforms in the internal affairs of the Company. He forbade the officials of the Company to engage in private trade and also tried to put a stop to the practice of accepting bribes. Secondly, after the battle of Plassey, the soldiers of the Company were enjoying, even in peace time, the benefits of an extra allowance which was payable only in times of war. Clive now issued orders to stop payment of this allowance except during war time.

Clive returned to England on 1767. In order to establish the power of the Company in India he had been guilty of some bad deeds. He had also amassed a private fortune by evil practices. For all these he was assailed after his return to his country and he had to suffer a lot. He committed suicide in 1774.

Estimate of Clive: There is no doubt that Clive was not

an admirable character in all respects. In the interest of the Company he practised fraud on Umi Chand and forged the signature of Watson. After the battle of Plassey he piled up a huge private fortune through very dubious means. We must, however, remember that in those days the officials of the Company had little reputation for honesty and justice. The bad practices for which we are inclined to hold Clive responsible did not at that time bear any great moral stigma. Though Clive showed skill in commanding troops, he was no military genius.



Robert Clive

In administration also, he was guilty of lack of foresight. The Double Government introduced by him ruined Bengal. However, the English were then ignorant of the internal condition of the country and the authorities of the Company were not prepared to shoulder the responsibility of ruling it. It was, therefore, no easy task to sponsor an administration which would pay some attention to the welfare of the

subjects. The main achievement of Clive lies in the fact that in times of crisis he showed extraordinary courage and presence of mind and was thus able to establish the Company's authority in the Carnatic and in Bengal. The battle of Plassey, the occupation of Arcot and the Northern Sarkars—all these were his priceless services to the Company. He is rightly regarded as one of the founders of the British Empire in India.

Famine of 1770 : Clive was succeeded as Governor by Verelst (1767-69) who was succeeded by Cartier (1769-72). Under them the Double Government set up by Clive created a havoc in Bengal.

In 1770 A. D. (1176 according to the Bengali Calendar) there was a terrible famine in Bengal. It is known as the Famine of '76. Lack of food and various diseases took a

toll of nearly one-third of the population of Bengal. Large tracts in Bengal's fertile fields were reduced to jungles for want of cultivators. Even in these terrible days the officials of the Company did nothing to render relief to the suffering people. It is a sad commentary on their humanity that even in the midst of this unprecedented disaster they could collect more than normal yield of revenue.

Model Questions :

1. Give a connected account of Anglo-French rivalry in the Deccan.
2. Describe the rise of the British power in Bengal from Plassey to Buxar.
3. Sketch the career and estimate the achievements of Clive.
4. Do you regard Clive as the real founder of the British Empire in India ?
5. Write notes on : (a) Dupleix ; (b) Battle of Wandiwash ; (c) Battle of Plassey ; (d) Mir Qasim ; (e) Battle of Buxar ; (f) Grant of Dewani ; (g) Famine of 1770.

CHAPTER 25

Warren Hastings (1772—1785)

When Cartier retired, Warren Hastings was appointed Governor of Bengal. Like Robert Clive, he also was a clerk under the Company in early life. Later, he rose to prominence through his ability. He was the chief representative of the Company in Bengal for more than twelve years. He was the Governor of Bengal for the first two years (1772-1774), when his authority was limited to Bengal. For the next ten years (1774-1785) he was the Governor-General of Bengal under Lord North's Regulating Act. During this period he had some authority over the Madras and Bombay Governments.

Administrative Reforms in Bengal : After assuming the Governorship of Bengal Hastings first gave his attention to

administrative reforms. The Double Government introduced by Clive had given rise to various disorders and malpractices. So, Hastings abolished the Double Government under orders of the Company's Directors. By taking over the Dewani directly the Company at last assumed the responsibility for governing the country. Reza Khan and Shitab Rai were dismissed. The Nawab's pension was reduced.

English officials were entrusted with the duty of collecting revenues. They became known as Collectors. Indian Dewans were appointed to assist them. To exercise supervision over all matters of revenue, a Revenue Board was set up at Calcutta with the Governor and his Council as its members. The treasury was brought over from Murshidabad to Calcutta. As a result Murshidabad lost much of its importance. Calcutta became the capital of Bengal. For facilitating collection of revenues, five-year settlements were made with the Zamindars. Those who agreed through open bid to pay the highest revenues to the Company were given the right to collect revenues for five years. But this system led to a number of evils. As the Zamindars knew that their tenure was limited to five years only, they tried to extract, through oppression of their subjects, as much revenue within as short time as possible. Again, many of them could not deposit the promised amount with Company's treasury by the due date. In 1773 a new system was introduced to meet these difficulties. The post of Collector was abolished; revenue collection in each district was placed in charge of an Indian Dewan. Six Provincial Councils supervised the work of these Dewans. Over all these Councils was placed the Committee of Revenue in Calcutta. This system was partially changed shortly afterwards when the five-year arrangement was replaced by one-year arrangement. In 1781 the post of the English Collector was revived, the Provincial Councils were abolished and the Committee of Revenue in Calcutta was re-organised. The revenue system was thus centralised. In fact Hastings failed to make the revenue system effective and just.

Hastings also introduced a new judicial system. There were one civil and one criminal court in every district. For hearing appeals two new courts—the **Sadar Dewani Adalat** and the **Sadar Nizamat Adalat**—were set up in Calcutta. In 1775 the **Sadar Nizamat Adalat** was transferred from Calcutta to Murshidabad and placed in charge of the **Naib Nazim** (the Nawab's representative). As in the case of the revenue system, the judicial measures of Hastings reveal a tendency to centralisation.

Judicial
system

In 1774 the Supreme Court was set up in Calcutta under the Regulating Act of Lord North.

Hastings laid the foundation of the Company's Civil Service by keeping the commercial and administrative spheres separate as far as possible. An English historian has rightly remarked that Hastings gave evidence of the evolution of his genius in the sphere of building up the administrative system.

Foreign policy of Hastings (1772-1774): At the time of Hastings the Marathas were the strongest power in India. Naturally he looked upon them with suspicion as the possible rivals of the English. Shortly

Marathas

before he took over charge, the puppet Mughal emperor Shah Alam had left the protection of the Company at Allahabad and gone to Delhi with the help of the Marathas. Hastings decided to stop paying him the annual sum of Rs. 26 lakhs which was

Shah Alam

his due in respect of the Dewani of Bengal-Bihar-Orissa granted to the Company. Shah Alam had been given the districts of Allahabad and Kora. These were now returned to Nawab Shuja-ud-daula of Oudh in lieu of Rs. 50 lakhs. This accession of strength to the Company's ally, Oudh, made the north-west frontiers of the Company more secure.

But this close connection with Oudh forced the Company to take part in the Rohilla War (1774). The Pathan Rohilla chiefs ruled over Rohilkhand, i.e., the north-western districts of modern U. P. This flourishing territory had become the object of covetous glances from Nawab Shuja-ud-daula of Oudh in the

east and the Marathas from the west (Delhi region). In 1771 Shuja-ud-daula occupied Rohilkhand with the military help of Hastings. Participation in the Rohilla War was no act of love on the part of the Company. In return for this service, Hastings extracted a huge sum for the Company from the Nawab of Oudh. The Rohillas had no enmity with the English. It was sordid on the part of Hastings to help Shuja-ud-daula bring about the ruin of the Rohillas just because the Company had been offered bribe for such assistance. However, the argument which to some extent excuses this unsavoury deal is that the Company badly needed the money. There was also the possibility that had Rohilkhand not been occupied by the Nawab of Oudh, it would perhaps in future have fallen to the Company's rivals, the Marathas. Thus by helping Shuja-ud-daula swallow Rohilkhand, Hastings was taking a preventive measure against a possible future contingency in the interests of the Company.

Intervention of Parliament in Indian affairs : Regulating Act : When the East India Company established the nucleus of an empire in India, the Cabinet in England considered it undesirable to leave the government of this territory completely to an association of merchants ; it was decided that the intervention of Parliament in the affairs of the Company was necessary. In 1773 the Regulating Act was passed by Parliament through the efforts of the then Prime Minister of England, Lord North. The following provisions of the Act deserve particular mention :

(1) The administration of Bengal was entrusted to a Governor-General and a four-member Council. Warren Hastings was made Governor-General and Clavering, Monson, Barwell and Philip Francis became members of the Council. If there was any difference of opinion, the majority would prevail. If there was a tie, the Governor-General would be entitled to a casting vote.

(2) The Madras and Bombay Presidencies were each placed

in charge of a Governor and a Council. As regards administration in general, these two Presidencies remained independent of Bengal. In economic and foreign affairs, however, these too were to some extent made subordinate to the Governor-General in Council of Bengal.

(3) For improving the judicial system a Supreme Court was set up in Calcutta. It comprised one Chief Justice and three Puisne (ordinary) judges. The Indian subjects of the King of England and the officials of the Company came under the jurisdiction of this Court. Sir Elijah Impey became the first Chief Justice. The Supreme Court was the King's Court; the Company had no authority over it.

(4) The Directors of the Company were obliged to place before the Cabinet in England all reports from India relating to revenue, administration and military affairs. This arrangement made Directors of the Company to some extent subordinate to the authority of the Cabinet.

It was the hope of Lord North that India would be governed justly if the activities of the Company came under the supervision of Parliament and Cabinet. But this hope did not materialise. The Regulating Act had some major defects. These were revealed in course of its operation. First, the fact that the Governor-General was bound by the decision of a majority in his Council gave rise to serious difficulties. Hastings' differences with the Council created a serious crisis in administration. Secondly, the authority of the Bengal Government over Madras and Bombay was not clearly defined. As a result, those two Governments differed with Bengal on many matters. Such disagreement became quite serious at the time of the First Maratha War. Thirdly, the provisions in the Regulating Act relating to the Supreme Court were somewhat vague. As a result, there was open dispute between Hastings and the Court in regard to some cases. In 1781 Parliament clarified the position in this respect by passing an Act.

Nanda Kumar : Maharaja Nanda Kumar, an influential officer brought against Hastings the charge of having accepted bribe from Mani Begam, the widow of Nawab Mir Jafar. This charge, if proved true, would have ruined Hastings. In self-defence Hastings counter-charged him with conspiracy. Before these charges and counter-charges could be settled, one Mohanprasad brought against Nanda Kumar a charge of forgery.



Impey

Nanda Kumar was found guilty by the Supreme Court and hanged (1775). Some historians hold the view that Mohanprasad accused Nanda Kumar at a hint from Hastings. They also think that Nanda Kumar was condemned to death by Sir Elijah Impey, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court who was also a friend of Hastings from his boyhood, on insufficient evidence under

a law which was not applicable to Indians. It is really doubtful if it was lawful to punish forgery by death, even if the charge against Nanda Kumar was proved.

Foreign policy of Hastings : First Maratha War : At the time of Hastings, the two principal rivals of the English in India were the Peshwa, the chief of the vast Maratha empire, and Haidar Ali, the powerful ruler of Mysore. It was to reduce Maratha influence in North India that Hastings had stopped the pension of emperor Shah Alam and tried in various ways (*e.g.*, helping in the conquest of Rohilkhand) to strengthen Nawab Shuja-ud-daula of Oudh, an ally of the Company.

After the disaster at Panipat in 1761 the Marathas had again established their supremacy in North India under the bold leadership of Peshwa Madhav Rao I (1761-1772). Emperor Shah Alam been able to return to Delhi under their protection. But in 1772 Peshwa Madhav Rao I died prematurely and was succeeded as Peshwa by his younger brother,

Narayan Rao. Within a very short period Narayan Rao was murdered by some followers of his uncle, Raghunath Rao, as the result of a conspiracy (1773). After this tragic event Raghunath became Peshwa (1773-1774). A few months later the widow of



Nana Fadnavis

Narayan Rao gave birth to a son, who is known in history as Peshwa Madhav Rao II or Madhav Rao Narayan. Those Maratha chiefs who were opposed to Raghunath declared this new born baby the new Peshwa and arranged to govern the empire in his name. Among these Maratha chiefs the most talented was Nana Fadnavis. At the time of Peshwa Madhav Rao II (1774-1799) it was Nana Fadnavis who was the actual ruler of the Maratha empire.

When the minor Madhav Rao II was installed as the

Peshwa, the deposed Raghunath Rao sought the help of the English Government in Bombay. He agreed to give them Salsette and Bassein near Bombay in return for such help.

Causes of the
First Maratha War Tempted by this offer of territory, the Bombay Government entered into the treaty of Surat with him (1775). In terms of the treaty an English army advanced in aid of Raghunath and defeated the army of the minor Peshwa. But the Bengal Government under Hastings, which did not like the idea of engaging in a war with the Marathas, cancelled the treaty of Surat and entered instead into a treaty (the treaty of Purandhar) with the Government of the minor Peshwa in 1776. By this treaty the Marathas gave the Company Salsette and promised to pay Rs. 12 lakhs to meet the expenses of the war. In return the Company agreed to stop helping Raghunath. But the Directors of the Company expressed their disapproval of the treaty of Purandhar and approved the treaty of Surat. The Bengal Government was now compelled to go to war against the Marathas together with the Bombay Government.

At the beginning of the war, the Bombay Government was defeated and compelled to sign a humiliating treaty at Wadgaon (1772). Hastings refused to recognise this treaty and continued the war. The Company entered into an alliance with the Gaikwad of Baroda. Goddard, a general sent from Bengal, captured Ahmedabad and Bassein, but was defeated on the way to Poona (1781). In 1780 General Popham captured the strong War fort of Gwalior in Central India. Mahadji Sindhia was defeated by General Camac (1781). In 1782 the treaty of Salbai, signed through the mediation of Mahadji Sindhia, ended the war. The English stopped supporting Raghunath in return for Salsette and recognised Madhav Rao II as the Peshwa. Raghunath was given a pension. In his conduct of this war Hastings had shown extraordinary determination and skill. The treaty of Salbai did not destroy the Maratha power. However, during Treaty the next twenty years the English did not have to fight the Marathas again.

Foreign policy of Hastings : Second Mysore War :

Towards the close of the First Maratha War the English were involved in a conflict with Haidar Ali of Mysore.

Mysore was at first a small Hindu kingdom in South India. Haidar Ali and his son, Tipu Sultan, transformed this small state into one of the major powers in India.

Haidar Haidar Ali was the son of a common soldier. Gradually, through his military ability and political foresight, he made himself supreme in Mysore (1761). In his attempt to extend his frontiers upto the river Krishna in the north he clashed with the Marathas. By conquering Malabar in the west he extended his frontier upto the sea-coast.

Haidar fought two wars with the East India Company. These are known in history as the First and Second Mysore Wars. The first war occurred a few years before (1767-1769) Hastings took charge of the administration. The second war started at the time of Hastings. Neither side gained any territory as a result of the first war, though the Company promised to come to the assistance of Haidar, if any third party attacked Mysore in future. Haidar extracted this promise from the English in view of possible Maratha moves.

In 1778 the American War of Independence led to a war between England and France in the West. As a result the English occupied the French colonies in India. Haidar was very angry when Sir Eyre Coote, the English general, captured the French port of Mahe situated within the territory of Mysore. He was also extremely displeased with the English for various other reasons. The English were not true to the terms of the treaty of 1769; for they did not come to the assistance of Haidar at the time of the Maratha attack on Mysore in 1771. That is why in 1779 Haidar began war against the English with the help of the Marathas who were already involved in the First Maratha War with the English. In 1780 he captured Arcot, but was defeated next year by Sir Eyre Coote at Porto Novo. In 1782 the English and the Marathas signed a treaty, but the war with the Mysore continued

for two more years. The Mysore forces defeated the English under Colonel Braithwaite. The presence of the famous French naval commander, Suffrein, in the Indian Ocean with some war-vessels was a moral booster for Haidar. Haidar died in 1782 before the war ended. Then Tipu continued the war against the English on the western coast. The English army prepared to attack Tipu's capital, Srirangapattan. The war was brought to an end in 1784 by the treaty of Mangalore. Both sides returned each other's conquered territories. The terms of the treaty, settled by the Governor of Madras, were not to the liking of Hastings.

Some black deeds of Hastings : In order to meet the expenses of the First Maratha War and the Second Mysore War Hastings collected money by methods which have cast slur on his name.

Chait Singh, the Raja of Banaras, was a tributary ruler under the Company. At the time of the First Maratha War Hastings faced such acute shortage of funds that he demanded several times from Chait Singh money in excess of what he was required to pay in terms of the agreement with him. Chait Singh met these illegal demands of the Governor-General. In 1780 Hastings ordered Chait Singh to supply a cavalry unit. As Chait Singh was unwilling to meet this new demand fully, he was imprisoned. As a result the soldiers of Banaras revolted and killed some Englishmen. After the revolt was put down, a relative of Chait Singh was made the ruler of Banaras.

Next came the turn of the Begams of Oudh. Nawab Asaf-ud-daula of Oudh, son and successor of Shuja-ud-daula, was unable to pay the debt he owed to the Company on account of expenses of the English troops stationed in his territory. Hastings ordered the seizure of the treasure belonging to his mother and grandmother (1782). It was cowardly of Hastings to coerce such high-born ladies for money.

Pitt's India Act : The defects of Lord North's Regulating Act became evident during Hastings' administration. A new

Act was passed in 1784 by the British Parliament through the efforts of the then Prime Minister, William Pitt the Younger. The main provisions were as follows.

(1) The Council of the Governor-General of Bengal would consist of three, instead of four, members.

A Supplementary Act passed in 1786 provided that in case there was a difference of opinion between the Governor-General and the Council, the Governor-General would be entitled to a casting vote.

(2) The Governor-General in Council would not go to war against any Indian State unless approved by the Directors of the Company.

(3) The Governor-General in Council would exercise more authority over the Madras and Bombay Governments in all matters relating to diplomacy, war and revenue. This was the first step towards centralisation of the administration of British India.

(4) A Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India (better known as Board of Control) was formed in England with six members. A member of the British Cabinet became President of the Board. The Directors of the Company were to place all papers relating to India before the Board and act under its direction. It was arranged that the orders of the Board would be conveyed to India through a Select Committee consisting of three Directors of the Company.

Pitt's Act brought all matters relating to India under the control of the British Cabinet. The basic principle behind the Regulating Act thus came to its logical culmination. But one main defect of the Regulating Act still remained. The Governor-General was still dependent on the Council. After two years the Governor-General was permitted to act against the advice of the Council, if this was considered necessary. The provisions of Pitt's Act were not to the liking of Hastings. But the administrative system introduced by this Act remained basically unaltered till the abolition of the Company's rule in 1858.

Impeachment of Hastings: When Hastings returned

to England, charges of maladministration and oppression were brought against him by prominent men like Burke and Fox. The House of Commons impeached him before the House of Lords. The main charges were his treatment of Chait Singh and the coercion of the Begams of Oudh. An attempt was also made to impeach him for his conduct in the Rohilla War, but it failed. The impeachment of Hastings was a long trial lasting from 1788 to 1795. Though, in the end, he was acquitted, the expenses of the long trial ruined him financially.

Hastings as patron of learning : Though Hastings was always busy with problems relating to external affairs, yet he found the time to be a patron of learning and literature. He appreciated the ancient wisdom of the East. He set up a *Madrasah* in Calcutta in 1781 for the teaching of Arabic and Persian. A few years later (1792) Jonathan Duncan, an official of the Company, founded the Sanskrit College at Banaras. Sir William Jones, a judge of the Supreme Court, founded the Asiatic Society in Calcutta in 1784. Scholars like Halhed, Wilkins and Colebroke, pioneers in Oriental studies, received the patronage of Hastings.

Achievements of Hastings : There is no doubt that Hastings occupies the chief place among the founders of the British Empire in India. He has no military achievement like that of Clive to his credit, for he was not a military man. But the success of the English in the First Maratha War and the Second Mysore War was due to his skilful conduct of these wars. In foreign policy he was far more successful than Clive. In internal affairs also he credited himself remarkably well. Though the revenue system introduced by Hastings had various defects, it was he who established peace, order and good government in the country after the great famine of 1772. In the Judicial Department the system introduced by him remained intact for a long time. His system of district administration became the very basis of the British administrative system in India. His attention was not confined to wars and collection of revenues. Among the British administrators of that age, he was the first to

Comparison
with Clive

encourage the spread of Oriental studies. But some black deeds mark his otherwise excellent character. He accepted money that was a sort of bribe from Mani Begam, the widow of Nawab Mir Jafar. Most probably it is he who conspired to bring about the death sentence of Nanda Kumar. His Defects oppression of Chait Singh and coercion of the Begams of Oudh are sordid chapters in his career. It is only because he did all these in the interest of the Company that his impeachment in Parliament did not result in any punishment. Though English historians are trying for long with one argument or another to defend his actions and clear his name, impartial historians cannot obviously ignore his misdeeds. His unique political insight and his extraordinary contributions to the establishment of the British empire in India must, however, be acknowledged.

Model Questions :

1. Give a succinct account of the achievements of Warren Hastings.
 2. Mention the principal difficulties of internal and foreign administration that Warren Hastings had to face and show how he overcame them.
 3. "Warren Hastings will always occupy an honoured place among Anglo-Indian statesmen." Why?
 4. Say what you know about the administration of Warren Hastings.
 5. In what way did Clive and Warren Hastings contribute to the foundation of British power in India?
 6. Give an account of the administrative reforms of Warren Hastings.
 7. What is the importance of Warren Hastings in Indian history?
 8. Write notes on : (a) Rohilla War, (b) First Anglo-Maratha War, (c) Second Anglo-Mysore War, (d) Haidar Ali, (e) Impeachment of Hastings, (f) Nanda Kumar, (g) Chait Singh, (h) Begams of Oudh.
 9. Describe the constitutional changes brought about by Lord North's Regulating Act and Pitt's India Act.
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CHAPTER 26

Expansion of the British Empire (1786-1818)

Lord Cornwallis (1786-1792) : Lord Cornwallis was not an official of the Company, as were Clive and Hastings. He was born in an aristocratic family of England. He was more attracted to administrative reforms than extension of empire.

Third Mysore War (1790-1792) : The Second Mysore War had not reduced the power of Tipu Sultan. The treaty of Mangalore was treated by both sides as a sort of truce. In order to strengthen himself with foreign help, Tipu sent envoys to France and Constantinople, the capital of Turkey. Tipu's connections with the French alarmed Lord Cornwallis. In 1789 Tipu attacked Travancore, a state under the protection of the Company. Then Lord Cornwallis took the field against Tipu (1790). The Peshwa and the



Cornwallis

Nizam did not let go this opportunity of crushing their powerful rival, Tipu. They joined the English.

In 1792, when the English army besieged Srirangapattan, Tipu acknowledged his defeat and entered into a treaty with the English. He

lost the greater part of the Mysore State.

In addition, he had to promise to pay Rs. 3 crores 30 lakhs in cash. His two sons were taken to reside with the English as hostages. The

territories taken from Tipu were divided between the Company, the Peshwa and the Nizam. This was the prelude to the fall of the independent kingdom of Mysore.

Sir John Shore (1793-1798) : Policy of Non-intervention : After Lord Cornwallis, Sir John Shore, an official long in the service of the Company, was appointed Governor-General. He adopted a policy of non-intervention towards the ruling princes

of India. He did not go to war against them nor did he intervene in their quarrels.

In 1795 the Nizam of Hyderabad was defeated by the Marathas at Kharda (or Kurdala) and a large part of territory was occupied by them. Shore did not go to the assistance of the Nizam. But he was not a non-interventionist in connection with the affairs of Oudh, an ally within the sphere of influence of the Company. After the death of Asaf-ud-daula, the Nawab of Oudh, Sir John Shore installed Sa'adat Ali, the deceased Nawab's brother, as the new Nawab, instead of Wazir Ali, who was a nominee of the late Nawab (1798).

LORD WELLESLEY (1798-1805)

Aims of Wellesley : After the retirement of Sir John Shore, the Marquess of Wellesley was appointed Governor-General. He was not in favour of Shore's policy of non-intervention. His aim was to extend and establish firmly British mastery in India. The era of British imperial expansion started by him ended with the retirement of Lord Dalhousie in 1856. Lord Wellesley occupies a very high place among the founders of the British empire in India.

French menace : When Lord Wellesley came to India, England was engaged in the Revolutionary War with France in Europe. Shortly after he had reached India (1799) Napoleon became the Head of the State in France. Napoleon tried to establish French supremacy in Egypt and threaten British interests in India. The Nizam of Hyderabad and Sindhia of Gwalior had appointed Frenchmen to command their armies. Tipu Sultan of Mysore had entered into diplomatic relations



Wellesley

with France. Lord Wellesley decided that in order to ensure the security of the British empire in India, these Indian rulers must be compelled to sever their connections with the French and be loyal allies of the British. In order to realise this objective he adopted a policy which is known as the policy of Subsidiary Alliance.

Policy of Subsidiary Alliance : The Indian ruling princes who entered into Subsidiary Alliance with the Company were given guarantees against attacks from outside and also against internal revolts. In return for this protection on the part of the Company, the princes had to accept various limitations on their freedom of action. They were liable to maintain units of

Implications of
Subsidiary
Alliance



Tipu Sultan

the British army in their States at their own expense. The

Company was paid either in cash or by surrender of a portion of their territories for meeting such expenses. No European could be employed in their States without the permission of the Company. Nor could they engage in war or establish political relations with other Indian or foreign powers. If they fulfilled these terms, they were left free to manage their internal administration. But even here, in actual practice, they had to guide themselves by the advice of the British Residents.

The feeble Nizam entered into Subsidiary Alliance with the Company without any resistance (1798). Peshwa Baji Rao II, who could not control powerful vassals like Sindhia and Holkar, surrendered, without any fight, his independence by the treaty of Bassein in 1802. But Tipu considered freedom too precious to be surrendered abjectly and, as a result, lost his kingdom and his life.

Fourth Mysore War (1799): After his defeat in the Third Mysore War Tipu had been trying in various ways to increase his strength. In order to secure French help, he himself became a member of the "Jacobin Club" of Revolutionary France. He sent envoys to French-occupied Mauritius, to Versailles (adjacent to Paris) where the French Kings used to hold their court, to Constantinople, the capital of Turkey, as also to Arabia and Kabul. As Tipu did not agree to enter into Subsidiary Alliance, Lord Wellesley attacked Mysore. The British army entered Srirangapattana. Tipu died fighting. A part of his kingdom was incorporated in the Company's territory. Over the rest, a descendant of the old Hindu dynasty of Mysore was installed as ruler. This newly established Hindu kingdom became subordinate to the Company in all matters. In this way the kingdom set up by Haider came to an end. The glory of Mysore was no more.

Expansion without war: Lord Wellesley extended the frontiers of the Company's territories in various ways. In 1799 the Nawab of Surat, and in 1800 the Maratha ruler of

Tanjore were made the Company's pensioners and their territories were brought under the control of the Company. In 1801 the Nawab of the Carnatic was deposed on the charge of conspiracy with Tipu Sultan. The Carnatic thus came under the rule of the Company. The Nawab of Oudh, Sa'adat Ali, was charged with misrule and forced to sign a treaty in 1801 by which he surrendered a large part of his territories (Ganges-Jamuna Doab, Rohilkhand and Gorakhpur) to the Company.

Establishment of British influence over Maratha Empire :

Second Maratha War : In 1796 Baji Rao II became Peshwa. In 1800 that master diplomat Nana Fadnavis, the all-powerful minister, died. In 1802 the ruler of Indore, Jaswant Rao Holkar, defeated the combined armies of the Peshwa and Daulat Rao Sindhia, the ruler of Gwalior, at Poona and established his authority over the Maratha capital. Baji Rao II left Poona and took shelter with the English at Bassein near Bombay. By the treaty of Bassein (1802) he entered into Subsidiary Alliance with the British, who now became the real masters of the Maratha dominions. An English army marched to Poona and installed Baji Rao II once again as Peshwa (1803).

Though the worthless Peshwa submitted to the Company, the valiant Maratha chieftains were not prepared to sacrifice their freedom. In 1803 Daulat Rao Sindhia and the Bhonsle Raja of Berar declared war against the Company. The Second Maratha War began. The chief of the British army in South India was Arthur Wellesley (later famous as the Duke of Wellington after defeating Napoleon at Waterloo), the younger brother of Lord Wellesley. The Commander-in-Chief, Lord Lake, himself led the Company's army in North India. The combined armies of Sindhia and Bhonsle were defeated by Arthur Wellesley at Assaye. Burhanpur and Asirgarh fell to him. Shortly thereafter, the army of Bhonsle was again defeated at Argaon. Meanwhile, in North India Lord Lake crushed the army of

Submission of
Peshwa

Defeat of Sindhia
and Bhonsle

Sindhia at Delhi and Laswari and occupied Delhi and Agra. All these events were telescoped into a period of only five months in the year 1803. By the treaty of Deogaon,

Treaties

Bhonsle surrendered to the Company Orissa (Cuttack and Baleswar) and a portion of his territory in Central India. Sindhia, in his turn, recognised British authority over the Ganges-Jumna Doab and surrendered territories including Ahmadnagar in South India by the treaty of Surji Anjangaon (1803). Emperor Shah Alam was so long under the protection of Sindhia. Now that Delhi had become a part of the Company's territory, he was taken under British protection.

After disasters had crippled Sindhia and Bhonsle, Jaswant Rao Holkar took the field against the British. But he was defeated and forced to seek refuge in the Punjab. Just at this time Lord Wellesley

Defeat of Holkar

resigned under the direction of the authorities in England. Lord Cornwallis was again sent to India as Governor-General, but he died soon after. Sir George Barlow, who was appointed the next Governor-General, concluded a treaty with Holkar (1806). Holkar's territories and political influence remained practically intact.

Achievements of Wellesley : The Directors of the Company were not much in favour of extension of dominions. Wellesley's policy of imperial expansion resulted in wars, the expenses of which made the Company's burden of debt heavier and reduced the share-holders' profit. But from the point of view of establishment of the British empire in India, there is no doubt that Wellesley was eminently successful in his policy. He put an end to French influence in India, destroyed the power of Mysore and forced the Nizam, the Peshwa, Sindhia and Bhonsle to submit to the Company. Had he not been compelled to resign prematurely, he would most probably have brought Holkar to submission. All in all, by making the Company

Wellesley's success

the undisputed master of India, he made British domination of India secure. The task left incomplete by him was completed by Lord Hastings a few years later.

Revival of policy of Non-intervention : Lord Cornwallis was re-appointed Governor-General in 1805 with directions to give up the policy of expansion and bring back peace in the Company's territories. Old and broken in health, Lord Cornwallis died only three months after he had reached India. Then Sir George Barlow, a senior member of the Council, held the post of Governor-General temporarily for two years (1805-1807). He revived Sir John Shore's policy of non-intervention under the direction of the authorities in England. Under him the Second Maratha War was brought to a close by a treaty signed with Holkar.

The next Governor-General, Lord Minto, was in charge from 1807 to 1813. He, too, adopted the policy of non-intervention.

Lord Minto
(1807-13)

During his tenure the Company did not go to war against any Indian ruler. He made Ranjit Singh, the Sikh ruler of the Punjab an ally of the Company and brought the Cis-Sutlej States under British influence by the treaty of Amritsar signed in 1809.

In Europe England was then at war with the French emperor Napoleon. In 1808 Lord Minto sent envoys to Kabul and Persia.

Fear of the
French

His object was to replace French influence in those two kingdoms by that of the British. In order to put an end to French influence in the Indian Ocean he occupied the islands of Mauritius and Bourbon in 1810. In 1811 Java was taken from the Dutch, the ally of the French.

Lord Moira (later known as Lord Hastings), who succeeded

Lord Hastings
(1813-23)

Lord Minto as Governor-General, gave up the policy of non-intervention and revived the policy of expansion.

Nepal War (1815-1816): The southern frontier of the Gurkha kingdom of Nepal touched the northern frontier of the Company's territory. The Gurkhas used to cross the frontier and raid the Company's territory. Repeated protests on the part of the Company bore no fruit. Then Lord Moria started war (1814). The British occupied Almora and captured the fort of Malaon after defeating the Gurkha general, Amar Singh

Thapa. Peace was restored in 1816 by the treaty of Sagauli. The districts of Garhwal and Kumaon were ceded to the Company.

Pindari War (1817-1818): In Rajputana, Malwa, Berar and other regions of Western and Central India a class of freebooters by profession, known as the Pindaris, were a great terror to the people. They had arms, but avoided open and direct clash. Different groups under different leaders lived by looting the possessions of helpless people. Some of these groups were associated with the armies of Holkar and Sindhia.

As it was necessary to suppress the Pindaris in order to keep peace in the Company's territories, Lord Hastings moved against them in 1817. Within a year the Pindaris were crushed and scattered in small groups. The chief among their leaders, Amir Khan, submitted to the Company and was granted the Nawabi of Tonk in Rajputana. Another Pindari leader, Karim Khan, surrendered and was given a small estate in U. P. Yet another leader, Chitu, fell a victim to a tiger. Leaderless and crushed, the Pindaris were no longer in a position to engage in free-booting on a large scale.

Fall of the Maratha Empire : Third Maratha War (1817-1818): After the Second Maratha War, the Maratha States were becoming weak due to various internal reasons. Though

Causes Peshwa Baji Rao II had submitted to the Company by the treaty of Bassein, he was engaged in conspiracy against the English. In 1817 Lord Hastings deprived him by a new treaty of the position of the head of the Maratha empire. The province of Konkan and some forts were also taken away from him. Sindhia was forced to recognise the right of the Company to enter into treaties with the States in Rajputana (1817) over which he had so long claimed vague suzerainty. A new treaty was made with the Bhonsle Raja of Nagpur in 1817, by which he accepted the policy of Subsidiary Alliance.

When Lord Hastings was busy with suppressing the Pindaris, time was opportune for the Maratha rulers to assert

their independence. In November, 1817, the Peshwa attacked the British camp at Kirki near Poona, but the attack failed in its purpose and the Peshwa fled from Poona. Then the Bhonsle Raja raided the British Residency at Sitabaldi near Nagpur, but was defeated (November, 1817). The Holkar's army met a similar fate in an encounter with the British at Mahidpur (December, 1817). In 1818 Baji Rao suffered reverses at Koregaon and Ashti and surrendered.

The victories of the Company in the Third Maratha War resulted in the fall of the Maratha empire. The Peshwa, deprived of his kingdom, became a pensioner of the Company with his residence at Bithur near Kanpur.

A major part of his kingdom came under the Company and formed part of the Bombay Presidency ; the rest was given to a member of Shivaji's dynasty, who was installed as the ruler of Satara. The northern areas of Bhonsle's kingdom came under the rule of the Company ; the rest was given to minor of the Bhonsle dynasty. Holkar was forced to cede to the Company the territory south of the river Narmada ; he also gave up his rights in Rajputana and submitted to the policy of Subsidiary Alliance.

The establishment of the Company's supremacy over Rajputana was a direct result of the Third Maratha War. The Rajput rulers were now free from the obligation of paying tribute to Sindhia and Holkar. He entered into Subsidiary Alliance with the Company, which became the sovereign power in Mewar, Jodhpur, Jaipur and other Rajput States.

In this way Lord Hastings completed the work begun by Lord Wellesley. The destruction of the Maratha empire was his greatest achievement. Except the Sikh kingdom in the Punjab, and Sind, Nepal and Assam, there were now no other independent States in India. The British became the undisputed master of India.

Model Questions :

1. Briefly narrate the principal events of Lord Wellesley's Governor-Generalship.
2. Explain Subsidiary Alliance and name the British ruler who was responsible for its initiation.
3. Explain Wellesley's policy of Subsidiary Alliance, and show how far he was able to establish the British as the paramount power in India.
4. Explain the term "Subsidiary Alliance." Give a brief account of the Anglo-Maratha War during Lord Wellesley's administration.
5. What steps did Lord Wellesley take to make the British paramount power in India ?
6. Describe Lord Wellesley's policy towards the Indian States.
7. State what you know of British relations with the Maratha powers in the time of Wellesley and Hastings the peer.
8. What led to the Third Maratha War ? What were its important consequences ?
9. How were the Marathas reduced to submission by Lord Wellesley and Lord Hastings ?

CHAPTER 27

Reforms of Cornwallis

Land revenue measures : Permanent Settlement : The administration of Lord Cornwallis is famous for the introduction of Permanent Settlement in the field of land revenue. The revenue system of Warren Hastings had created various difficulties. At that time the Zamindars were not allowed permanent rights in land. Those who agreed to pay maximum revenue were allowed such rights for a fixed period of several years.

Evils of temporary settlement After that period was over they ceased to have any more rights in land, for such rights were then given to those who offered to pay the maximum revenue. As the Zamindars were uncertain about their future, they tried to extract as much money from their tenants as possible within the stipulated period. The

land was neglected, for the Zamindars had no stake in trying to improve it. This not only reduced the productive capacity of the soil, but also made the tenants miserable. Such an arrangement was not also to the best interests of the Company in the long run. There were many who promised to pay the maximum revenue in order to secure Zamindari rights, but could not actually pay the Company's dues on the expiry of the fixed period. The actual revenue receipts of the Company in any particular year were, therefore, quite uncertain. The lack of any firm estimate of income created great difficulties for the administration. Thus the system of temporary settlement made all the parties concerned—the Company, the Zamindars and the tenants—losers.

From the time of Hastings himself the idea that the revenue payable by the Zamindars should be permanently fixed was gradually gaining ground. Noticing the evils of the system introduced by Hastings, Cornwallis decided that what was needed in Bengal was the system of permanent settlement which prevailed in England. The Zamindars were to hold land permanently and pay the revenues due to the Company in time at a rate fixed for ever. But those who failed to pay their fixed quota of revenue in time were to forfeit Zamindari to the Company. This system of permanent settlement, recommended by Lord Cornwallis and approved by the authorities of the Company, was introduced in Bengal-Bihar-Orissa in 1793. Later it came into effect in a part of Madras and at Banaras.

The immediate effect of the Permanent Settlement was that it favoured the Zamindars and went against the interest of the tenants. The Zamindar became the owner of the land and the revenue to be paid by him to the Government was fixed for ever. He could, at his sweet will, increase the rent payable by his tenants and evict them from land. As more and more land came under the plough the Zamindar correspondingly gained. The increased yield which came from the land by the sweat of the tenants' brows was appropriated by the Zamindar without any labour on his part. In the latter half of the 19th century

System of
Cornwallis

Results of
Permanent
Settlement

some legislative measures relating to the rights of the tenants limited somewhat the powers of the Zamindars and afforded some relief to the tenants.

The Permanent Settlement, however, did not prove wholly beneficial to the Zamindars. It either impoverished or ruined altogether some of the famous Zamindar families of Bengal. The Company's Government put to auction many Zamindari estates for failure to pay revenue by due date. Within only twenty years of its introduction a half to one-third of the estates went to auction. Some of the Zamindars saved themselves by leasing land to middlemen. Though the system of lease was opposed to the basic objective of the Permanent Settlement, this became one of its main features.

Though the Permanent Settlement assured the Company of a stable receipt of revenue by a fixed date, the Government was a loser in another respect. As the revenue payable by the Zamindars was fixed permanently, there was no hope of any increase in income from this source. Any increase in the income of the Zamindars did not correspondingly lead to an increase in the Company's revenues. As a result, the need for more funds was met by taxing the people more heavily.

The Permanent Settlement gave rise to a class of influential Zamindars and a flourishing middle class. The Zamindars of Bengal were at one time the most prominent among those who defended British rule in India. However, they had a long record of public service to their credit. Many schools and dispensaries founded by them and many tanks dug and many roads built with their funds dotted the land. But in recent times they had lost much of their spirit of public service; they had snapped their bonds with the people by becoming residents of urban areas. That is why free India has abolished the Permanent Settlement.

Administrative Reforms of Cornwallis: In order to bring order in the administration Lord Cornwallis took several steps. In those days, the officials of the Company stooped to unfair means to enrich themselves. Lord Cornwallis tried to prevent

Prevention of
corruption

such corrupt practices by raising their salary and plugging the avenues of corruption as far as possible. Measures were taken to employ honest and responsible officials who were paid high salaries. Cornwallis had no faith in the honesty of Indian officials ; he, therefore, did not appoint them to any responsible post.

For facility of administration two top British officers were appointed for each district : the District Judge and Magistrate, and the Collector. The District Judge and District Magistrate tried cases and preserved peace within the district. The Police Department in the district was under his control. The Collector was to devote himself solely to collection of revenue ; he had no right to try either criminal or civil cases. For better police work each district was divided into several *thanas* (police stations) and each *thana* placed under a *daroga* (officer-in-charge).

Lord Cornwallis also introduced reforms in respect of trial of criminal and civil cases. The District Judge was to try all civil cases arising within the district. He was assisted by a Hindu *pandit* (scholar) and a Muslim *Qazi*. Four Provincial Courts subordinate to the *Sadar Dewani Adalat* and superior to the district courts were set up. Each such Provincial Court had three British Judges. To advise them about Hindu Law and Muslim Law there were appropriate Indian officials. The Judges of the Provincial Courts not only heard appeals in civil cases ; they toured as Circuit Courts through the districts and tried criminal cases.

The Regulations relating to the administrative and judicial reforms of Lord Cornwallis were compiled in the 'Cornwallis Code'.

Abolition of Company's monopoly trade : From the time of Elizabeth to the first half of the 19th century the East India Company enjoyed a monopoly of Indian trade, *i. e.*, no other British Company or merchant could lawfully trade in India. By the Charter Act of 1813 this monopoly right of the Company was abolished. Only in respect of trade in tea and trade with China did the Company continue to enjoy such monopoly ; in the

Charter Act of
1813

case of other commodities all British merchants were allowed equal right to trade in India. As the war with Napoleon in Europe had closed the European ports to British commerce, it was necessary to compensate British traders by opening for them an outlet for trade in India. The Industrial Revolution in England was leading to increase in production, but there was no scope for sale of such British products in the territories dominated by Napoleon. Now the English merchants got the opportunity to export products to India.

Model Questions :

1. What led Lord Cornwallis to adopt Permanent Settlement in Bengal? What were its merits and demerits?
2. Explain the administrative reforms of Lord Cornwallis.

CHAPTER 28

Western Education and Various Reforms

At the time of Lord Amherst (1823-1828) the First Burmese War occurred. The next Governor-General was Lord William Bentinck (1828-1835). His administration is known for various reforms.

Administrative reforms of Bentinck : The First Burmese War (1824-1826) resulted in a severe drainage of the Company's funds. As an economy measure, therefore, the salaries and allowances of officials were reduced. There were similar reductions in allowances in the army. To increase revenue, duty was imposed on the trade in Malwa opium. The new land-tenure systems in Madras and Agra increased the receipts of the Company.

The administrative reforms of Lord Cornwallis had not been an unmixed blessing. Bentinck introduced some changes in his

system. The Provincial Courts were abolished. The District Collectors were, from now on, to try criminal cases. The Persian language was replaced by the regional languages in the courts. Indians were appointed to comparatively responsible posts in the administration and the judiciary. As a result, the judicial department began to function more efficiently and cost less. For the Indians, the post of Sub-Judges was created. Bentinck also abolished the practice of punishing Indian soldiers with stripes.

Social reforms of Bentinck : *Sati* or widow-burning was practised in India from very ancient times. Hindu widows of the higher castes used to sacrifice themselves on the funeral pyres of their dead husbands. Though many embraced this horrible form of death quite willingly because social custom and the canons of the scriptures enjoined it, there is no doubt that the instigations and threats of the relatives forced widows



Bentinck

to this unwelcome death in many cases. This practice had become so widespread in Bengal that in one year alone—in 1817—as many as 760 widows gave up their lives in the practice of *Sati*. Fearing that it would wound the religious sentiments of the Hindus, the authorities of the Company had not dared put a stop to this practice so long. But in 1829 Lord William Bentinck made it a severely punishable offence to be con-

nected in any way with the practice of *Sati*. This measure put a stop to widow-burning. In this very welcome act of social reform, Government received the co-operation of enlightened Hindu leaders like Raja Ram Mohan Ray and 'Prince' Dwarkanath Tagore.

Suppression of Thugs : Lord Hastings had saved people from the Pindari terror by suppressing them, but his attention was not attracted to the ruthless criminals known as Thugs

or Thugees. These dangerous murderers used to move all over India posing as innocent passers-by and seized every opportunity to murder and rob innocent and unwary wayfarers. Their depredations had made the roads unsafe for common people. Under the orders of Lord William Bentinck many Thugs were captured by Sir William Sleeman. The precautionary measures taken by the Government gradually put an end to the Thuggee terror:

Introduction of Western education : The battle of Plassey had ushered in a new age in the history not only of Bengal, but of India also. The signs of this new age became apparent in the first half of the 19th century. The moribund State and society in Bengal under the Mughals got a new vigour as a result of close connection with Europe. The administration conducted by the Europeans gave evidence of new vigour and strength. Education, literature and religion were transformed. The link with the western civilization inspired the stagnant society of the East with a new spirit, industry and idealism. Renaissance in Bengal made her the centre of education and culture in India in the 19th century. The new look in literature, the new ideas of social reform, a new spirit in religion and politics—all these were Bengal's gift to India. Bengal was the birth-place of the Indian Renaissance.

What mainly brought about this epoch-making transformation not only in Bengal but also in the entire Indian scene was the introduction and spread of western education. Though Warren Hastings had taken steps for improvement in Oriental

studies, it was not before the Charter Act of 1813 that the responsibility of the British Government for the improvement of education in India was officially recognised. The Charter

State respon-
sibility for
education

Act of 1813 laid down that "a sum of not less than one lac of rupees in each year shall be set apart and applied to the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the learned natives of India, and for the introduction and promotion of a knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories in India." This open admission of the State's

direct responsibility in the matter of education lends this provision of the Charter Act of 1813 a great significance.

Before the importance of western education became clear in the eyes of Government, the progressive Hindus of Calcutta had already appreciated its value, and with the co-operation of the enlightened watch-maker from Scotland, David Hare, established the 'Hindu College' in 1817. This is an epoch-making step in the history of the introduction of western education in India. The 'Hindu College' was later renamed 'Presidency College'. David Hare occupies an imperishable place as one of the greatest of those who introduced English education in India. The 'School Book Society' established by him had paved the way for western education by publishing text-books in English.

The top officials of the Company were divided in their opinion as to the necessity for the introduction of western education. Prinsep was in favour of spread of education through the medium of Oriental languages like Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian. Those who were in favour of spread of education through the medium of English found their mouthpiece in Thomas Babington Macaulay, the first Law Member of the Governor-General's Council. He was a famous literary figure and historian, but his total ignorance of the languages and cultures of the East led him to make the ridiculous remark that "a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia." Progressive Hindu leaders like Raja Ram

Mohan Roy favoured western education. Lord Bentinck's decision (1835) Bentinck, the Governor-General, supported the viewpoint of Macaulay. On March 7, 1835, the Governor-General in Council decided that Government funds earmarked for spread of education should only be spent on English education. Thus the way was paved for western education under the patronage of Government. The Government Medical College in Calcutta was founded at the time of Bentinck.

In 1844 Lord Hardinge, the then Governor-General, declared that people with knowledge of English would be given preference

in Government service. This statement increased the desire for English education among the middle-class of Bengal.

In 1854, at the time of Lord Dalhousie, the President of the Board of Control, Sir Charles Wood, sent an Educational Despatch. As desired in this despatch, three Universities were set up in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay at the time of Lord Canning in 1857.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy : The first and the greatest among those who ushered in the new age in Bengal, nay in India, was Raja Ram Mohan Roy. He was born in 1772 and passed away in 1833. His versatile genius had suggested new paths to his countrymen in the spheres of education, religion, society and politics. Though a great scholar in Sanskrit, Arabic and other Oriental languages, he was yet in favour of western education in this country. He knew very well that a new India would not be born unless our country was brought in direct contact with the wisdom of the West. In order to put an end to the superstitions associated with the Hindu religion, he preached the doctrine of one God and founded the Brahmo Samaj. In the field of social reform, he took a leading part in the move to put an end to the practice of *Sati*. In the sphere of politics he was the pioneer of nationalism and patriotism. He was sympathetic to the democratic movement in Europe. He is recognised as the father of modern Bengali prose. He not only paid attention to solving the immediate problems, but also showed the way to the progress of the nation in future.

In the period after Ram Mohan, Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar assumed the leadership of the Bengali society in the matter of spread of education and social reforms.

Model Questions :

1. Indicate the administrative and other reforms introduced by Bentinck.

2. What part did David Hare, Ram Mohan Roy, Macaulary and Bentinck play in the spread of Western education in Bengal ?

CHAPTER 29

Extension of Empire in the North-West

Conquest of the Punjab : As a result of the Second Maratha War Delhi had come under the rule of the English. Then at the time of Dalhousie the conflict with the Sikhs resulted in the expansion of British India up to the Khyber Pass.

The Sikhs had become independent in the Punjab fighting Ahmad Shah Abdali and his descendants. But they had no political unity. They were divided into twelve 'misls' or groups. The chief of each group ruled a piece of territory. By uniting these small principalities Ranjit Singh, the lion of the Punjab, established a powerful Sikh State.

Ranjit Singh was born in 1780. His father was the chief of a 'misl'. Like Shivaji and Akbar, Ranjit Singh, too, was unlettered. Yet his unique military and political genius enabled him to found a large independent kingdom. In 1799 he occupied Lahore. Then by force of arms he occupied the territories belonging to other 'misls'. In 1806 he captured Ludhiana. Then the Cis-Sutlej

Treaty of Amritsar States sought the protection of the British against him. In 1809, at the time of Lord Minto, the Company and Ranjit Singh became allies by the treaty of Amritsar. The English extended their authority on the southern side of the Sutlej—the Cis-Sutlej area or the region between the Jumna and the Sutlej. The other side of the Sutlej came under the supremacy of Ranjit Singh. Due to the intervention of the British, chances for the establishment of a single Sikh kingdom over the whole of the Punjab vanished. Ranjit Singh died in 1839, thirty years after signing this treaty. Throughout this long period he observed the terms of the treaty and maintained his friendship with the British.

After the treaty of Amritsar Ranjit Singh busied himself

with extending his dominions in the north and the north-west. As those regions were still under the occupation of the descendants of Ahmad Shah Abdali, this attempt on the part of Ranjit Singh resulted in a conflict between him and the Afghans. After much fighting,

Ranjit and the
Afghans



Ranjit Singh

Kashmir and Peshawar (including the frontier) became parts of his kingdom. He could not occupy Sind due to the intervention of the English. He was an associate of the British in the First Afghan War.

Ranjit Singh organised the warlike Sikhs into a very powerful force by training them in western techniques. Like Sindhia, he also had some European commanders in his army. This well-trained army gave a very good account of itself in the wars with the British after his death. Ranjit Singh also showed great skill in administration.

After the death of Ranjit Singh in 1839, troubles arose in the Sikh kingdom for various reasons, particularly for want of an able ruler. The Khalsa army became very influential due to the weakness of the Lahore Darbar. English historians are of the opinion that Rani Jindan, mother and guardian of the boy king, Dalip Singh, and her advisers, failing to control the army, encouraged it to attack English territory. The army was already perturbed by the suspicion that the English were preparing in secret for the conquest of the Punjab.

In 1854, at the time of Lord Hardinge, the Sikhs crossed the Sutlej and war began. The English won at Mudki, Ferozeshah, Aliwal and Sobraon with the indirect help of treacherous Sikh commanders. It was decided by the treaty of Lahore (1846) that the Jalandhar Doab was to be ceded to the Company, as also all places on the left side of the Sutlej. As compensation for the war, Kashmir and Jammu were taken away from the Sikhs. The English then sold these two provinces to Gulab Singh and recognised him as the ruler of these territories. The Lahore Darbar was weakened by a reduction in the number of Sikh soldiers. Shortly afterwards, another treaty was signed, British forces were stationed in the Punjab and a British Resident became, for all purposes, the ruler of the Sikh kingdom. The Punjab was now not much more than a protected territory under the Company.

Naturally the Sikhs—freedom-loving and skilled warriors—could not take this lying down. The English authorities had wounded their sentiments by exiling Rani Jindan for her anti-British attitude. Discontent was reaching the boiling point on all sides and war began when the governor of Multan, Mulraj,

headed a revolt. In an engagement fought at Chilianwala in 1849, the British did not really win. Shortly thereafter, the British captured Multan and Lord Gough defeated the Sikhs at Gujarat. By a proclamation issued in March, 1849, Lord Dalhousie formally annexed the Punjab. The boy Maharaja Dalip Singh, who was really innocent, was not spared; he was deposed and sent to England as a pensioner.

The North-West Frontier : First Afghan War : In the first half of the 19th century the Barakzai chief, Dost Muhammad, made himself master of Kabul. Shah Shuja, a descendant of Ahmad Shah Abdali, was driven away from the throne of Kabul and began to reside in India under the protection of Ranjit Singh and then that of the English.

Causes of First Afghan War When Lord Auckland was Governor-General (1836-1842) the English clashed with Dost Muhammad. This is known as the First Afghan War (1839-1842). The real cause of this war was British suspicion about Russian motives. Lord Palmerston, the then Foreign Secretary in England, was a Russophobe. At this time the Russians were increasing their influence in Persia in Central Asia. Lord Auckland tried to forestall the Russians in Afghanistan by trying to establish friendly terms with Dost Muhammad, who demanded Peshawar as the price of such friendship. But Peshawar was then under Ranjit Singh, a British ally, and Lord Auckland could not oblige Dost Muhammad. The disappointed Afghan Amir gave a warm reception to a Russian envoy and offended the British. Lord Auckland resolved to drive out Dost Muhammad and restore Shah Shuja on the throne of Kabul. Shah Shuja was then living at Ludhiana under the protection of the British. In 1838 Lord Auckland entered into a treaty with Ranjit Singh and Shah Shuja.

Then the English forces marched into Afghanistan and captured Kandahar, Ghazni and Kabul within a very short period. Dost Muhammad surrendered. He was sent to Calcutta as a captive. Shah Shuja was installed as Amir at Kabul (1839). In 1841 the Afghans rose in revolt under the

leadership of Akbar Khan, the son of Dost Muhammad, and killed high English officials such as Burnes and Macnaghten. The English forces evacuated Kabul and started towards India. On the way they fell to Afghan bullets. When news of the disaster reached him, Lord Auckland resigned and was succeeded by Lord Ellenborough (1842-1844).

Under the orders of Lord Ellenborough an English army again advanced against Afghanistan. The city of Ghazni and its fort were destroyed. The bazar at Kabul was blown up. Shah Shuja had already been killed by the rebel Afghans. The victorious British forces returned to India. Dost Muhammad was allowed to go back to Kabul and reoccupy the throne. Though the war cost the English greatly in men and money, they gained nothing.

Second Afghan War (1878-1881) : The Second Afghan War occurred forty years after the First Afghan War, at the time of Governor-General Lord Lytton. As at the time of the First Afghan War, this time also the basic cause of the war was British suspicion about Russian ambition in Afghanistan and Central Asia.

The British Prime Minister, Disraeli, favoured a "spirited foreign policy". He was even ready to fight the Russians, if necessary, to maintain British power and prestige intact in Asia. This imperialist policy was to be translated into action by Lord Lytton, who himself was a believer in that policy. Though the then Amir of Afghanistan, Sher Ali, was not pleased with the British, he had not yet established friendly relations with the Russians. Lord Lytton tried to intimidate him in various ways. He increased the suspicions of Sher Ali by establishing a British army base at Quetta on the frontiers of Afghanistan in terms of a treaty with the Khan of Kalat (1871). The Amir suspected this to be a preliminary move in connection with a coming British offensive against Kandahar. Again, by a treaty with the Maharaja of Kashmir, the British established a base at Gilgit.

Alarmed at these apparently hostile developments, Sher Ali signed a treaty of freindship with a Russian envoy (1878). This open demonstration of Russo-Afghan freindship made Lord Lytton angry. He sent his envoy to Kabul; but Sher Ali refused to allow the envoy to enter his territory (1878). Taking this as yet another demonstration of Russo-Afghan alliance and Afghan enmity to England, Lord Lytton declared war in November, 1878.

Within a short period British forces entered Afghanistan by three different routes. Kandahar was occupied. Unable to defend his kingdom, Sher Ali fled to Turkestan, where he died in 1879. His son, Yaqub Khan, became an ally of the British by the treaty of Gandamak in May, 1879. The British recognised him as Amir of Kabul. It was agreed to post a British Resident at Kabul. But Yaqub Khan became as unpopular as was Shah Shuja at the time of the First Afghan War. Cavagnari, the British Resident at Kabul, was killed by rebellious Afghan soldiers. As a result, war was renewed. General Roberts defeated the Afghans and Yaqub Khan was deported to India. Meanwhile as a result of a General Election in England, peace-loving Gladstone replaced Disraeli as Prime Minister. Lord Lytton resigned, leaving the Afghan War inconclusive (June, 1880).

Lord Ripon, who became the Governor-General after Lord Lytton, was a peace-loving man. He showed political foresight by ending the Afghan War and recognising the independence of the Afghans.

After the deportation of Yaqub Khan, Abdur Rahman, Sher Ali's nephew (brother's son), claimed the throne of Kabul.

Lord Lytton recognised him as Amir on condition that the Amir would have no political relations with any foreign power except the British. Gradually Abdur Rahman established his authority firmly over all parts of Afghanistan by force of arms. Then the British army turned to India (1881).

Unjustifiable alarm and injudicious haste of the English lay at the root of the Second Afghan War. But from the political

and military aspects, the Second Afghan War was not as barren for the English as the First Afghan War. This war resulted in the submission of the Khan of Kalat to the English. Quetta became a permanent British military base. The Bolan Pass came under the control of the English. With the territories received from the Amir, a new province (Baluchistan) was formed. The Russian danger in Afghanistan vanished.

Conquest of Sind: One of the main events of Lord Ellenborough's tenure (1842-1844) was the conquest of Sind. The Muslim Amirs of Sind had treaty relations with the Company. At the time of the First Afghan War they helped the English in many ways. Still they were accused of disloyalty and an army under Sir Charles Napier was sent to Sind. The Amirs were defeated at Miani and Dabo. Sind was annexed by the British.

Model Questions :

1. Sketch the career of Ranjit Singh.
2. Give a connected account of British relations with the Sikhs.
3. What were the causes and results of the First Afghan War?
4. Why did the Second Afghan War break out? What advantages did the British derive from it?

CHAPTER 30

Lord Dalhousie (1848-1856)

One of the greatest Governors-General of British India, Lord Dalhousie, followed a policy of annexation like one of his great predecessors, Lord Wellesley. It was his idea that the Company's benevolent rule was more to the interest of the Indian people than the misrule of the Indian princes. He, therefore, lost no opportunity for expansion of the Company's territory. He also showed extraordinary qualities in administration. He introduced various reforms with a view to advancing the welfare of the subjects. He personally supervised all matters without depending on the officials. Except Lord Curzon, no

Governor-General of India was as hard-working as Lord Dalhousie.

Lord Dalhousie annexed the Sikh kingdom in the Punjab and the province of Pegu in Burma by resort to arms. The Second Sikh War (1848-1849) and the Second Burmese War (1852) were the chief military episodes of this period.

Doctrine of Lapse: Following this Doctrine, Lord Dalhousie absorbed some Indian States in the Company's empire. If the ruler of a Princely State set up under the patronage of the Company died without leaving a male issue, his territory lapsed to the Company. Unless approved by the English authorities, such a ruler could not make an adopted son the heir to the throne. This is the famous Doctrine of Lapse. Lord Dalhousie did not introduce this doctrine; it was there before he came to India. But Lord Dalhousie applied this doctrine more ruthlessly than the previous Governors-General. This was due to his strong desire for annexation. When the

Annexations rulers of Satara, Jhansi, Nagpur and Sambalpur (in Orissa) died without leaving any male issues, Lord Dalhousie arranged for the lapse of their territories to the Company. In the case of Satara and Nagpur, Lord Dalhousie's main objective was to make the Company's Indian empire more cohesive. The road links between Bombay and Madras and between Bombay and Calcutta ran through the territories of Satara and Nagpur respectively. The forfeiture of the titles and the pensions of Indian rulers dying without male issues followed almost logically from the Doctrine of Lapse. Thus the adopted sons of the Nawab of the Carnatic and the Raja of Tanjore were deprived of their fathers' titles and pensions. After the death of the deposed Peshwa, Baji Rao II, in 1853 Nana Saheb, his adopted son, was refused pension. These measures of

Effect Lord Dalhousie alarmed the Indian rulers. The suspicion gained ground that the object of the Doctrine of Lapse was the gradual absorption of the princely states by the Company. There is no doubt that this is one of the main causes of the Revolt of 1857.

Annexation on other grounds: In extending the

Company's territories Lord Dalhousie not only went to war and applied the Doctrine of Lapse ; he adopted other means too. On a charge of misrule, Wazid Ali, the Nawab of Oudh, was made a pensioner and his State taken over by the Company (1856). Though the English authorities had warned the Nawabs of Oudh time and again, they had not taken any steps for improving their administration. Lord Dalhousie was not in favour of outright annexation of Oudh ; he wanted English officials to take charge of the administration there, as was done in Mysore. But the Board of Directors of the Company decided on total annexation. This was an extremely ill-advised move. The Revolt of 1857 was most intense in Oudh.

A part of Sikkim was taken over by the Company on a charge of ill-treatment of an English official and oppression on two British subjects. The Nizam of Hyderabad had failed to pay the Company's dues for maintenance of British forces. He was forced to place the province of Berar under the Company's administration (1853).

Internal administration : Lord Dalhousie's long administration is not remembered only for his annexations. He paid particular attention to improving the administration and to the well-being of the people. He established the Public Works Department for building roads, digging canals etc. for the good of the people. It was at his time that the Railways were first introduced to India. He caused the Grand Trunk Road to be repaired and the digging of a canal from the Ganges to be completed. The telegraphic system was introduced in this country at his time. Efficient arrangements were made for despatch of letters etc. at a very small cost. Lord Dalhousie was also sympathetic to social reforms. Under him, in response to the move sponsored by Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, a law was passed making the re-marriage of Hindu widows legal. Formerly Hindu converts to other religions were deprived of the rights of inheritance. Lord Dalhousie stopped this. In

1854 Sir Charles Wood, the President of the Board of Control, sent an Educational Despatch to India. As directed in it, the

Department of Public Instruction was set up
Education and in 1857, three Universities were founded in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay in the time of Lord Canning, the Governor-General who was sent to India after Lord Dalhousie.

Charter Act of 1853 : A Charter Act was passed in 1853, when Lord Dalhousie was the Governor-General. The Company was to continue the administration of British India until further orders in terms of this Charter. A Legislative Council was set up for making law. This Council had twelve members in all—the Governor-General, the Commander-in-Chief, the four members of the Governor-General's Council, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court and another Judge, and four officials of the Company nominated by the four Provincial Governments (Bengal, Madras, Bombay and North-West Province). The administration of Bengal was entrusted to a Lieutenant-Governor.

Model Questions :

1. Review the administration of Lord Dalhousie.
2. Explain the 'Annexation policy' of Lord Dalhousie and indicate the steps which he took to carry it into effect.
3. Describe the Doctrine of Lapse.
4. What reforms were introduced by Lord Dalhousie for the people of India ?

CHAPTER 31

Revolt of 1857

After Lord Dalhousie, Lord Canning took charge of the administration in India. The major event of his tenure was the Indian Revolt, known generally as the Sepoy War or the Sepoy Mutiny. Indian soldiers (Sepoys) comprised a majority in the

Company's army. The British empire in India rested on the loyalty and fighting capacity of the Sepoys. They sometimes revolted in the different military bases for various reasons. In 1857 they rose in revolt on a scale and with an intensity never known before. Their uprising almost toppled the British empire in India.



Lord Dalhousie

Angry with the English for various reasons the Sepoys rose against them collectively. Lord Dalhousie's policy of annexation had alarmed many in India. Many of them thought that

the Company was bent on occupying the whole of India by putting an end to the Princely States. This possibility not only alarmed the ruling Princes; the Zamindars, the officials and the soldiers in these States were also afraid for their interests. After Oudh was brought under the Company's administration, the interests of the Talukdars had suffered and many Sepoys were dismissed. That is why the Revolt reached the peak of its intensity in the Oudh region. There it was not confined to the Sepoys, but was truly a national rising embracing all sections of the people. Lord Dalhousie had expressed his desire to banish the puppet Mughal emperor from his palace in Delhi. This offended the Muslims. The refusal to continue pension to Nana Sahib, the adopted son of the deposed Peshwa Baji Rao II who was dead, created discontent among many Hindus.

Secondly, these political grievances were mixed up with social and religious misgivings. The orthodox Hindus had not really been able to reconcile themselves to such measures as banning of widow-burning, the legislation on re-marriage of Hindu widows, the grant of rights of inheritance to converts to other religions, the spread of western education and intro-

Causes of the
Revolt

duction of female education. Many were convinced that the English were out to subvert the Hindu religion and replace it with Christianity. The Sepoys could not hold themselves in check when orders came for the use of Enfield rifles with cartridges made of animal fat. They had lost much of their awe of the English on hearing of their reverses in the Crimean War. The small number of British soldiers in India made them hopeful of an easy victory.

The Revolt broke out first at Berhampore and Barrackpore in Bengal. A few days later, in May, 1857, it assumed a more serious shape at Meerut. The rebel Sepoys killed a large number of Englishmen at Meerut and marched towards Delhi, which fell into their hands. They declared the aged Mughal emperor Bahadur Shah II as the ruler of India (May, 1857). The Revolt spread to the province of Agra, though Agra city remained under the control of the British. In September, 1857, the English recovered Delhi with the help of Sikh soldiers from the Punjab. At Kanpur, Nana Saheb declared himself the Peshwa. Many English people were killed there (June, 1857). Kanpur was captured by the British Commander-in-Chief, Sir Colin Campbell, in December, 1857. At Lucknow, Sir Henry Lawrence was killed in an attack by the rebellious Sepoys (July, 1857). Later, Sir Colin Campbell rescued the Europeans besieged at Lucknow (March, 1858). At Bareilly, the revolt began in May, 1857. A year later Sir Colin Campbell recovered Bareilly. In Central India, the rebels were led by the Maratha hero Tantia Topi and Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi. Sir Hugh Rose defeated them in April, 1858, and occupied Jhansi. By July, 1858, order again prevailed all over India.

There is no sufficient reason to conclude that the Sepoy uprising was a pre-meditated, pre-arranged affair. In actual fact it was a spontaneous outburst of the long-standing discontent among the Sepoys. It was not backed by any political party or organisation. It did not break out as a result of instigation or patronage of foreign powers like Russia or Persia.

The uprising was at first limited to the Sepoys. It did not start as a national rising against foreign domination. Even the Sepoys had not all joined it; rather a large section of them actively helped the English. But gradually the Revolt spread among both Hindu and Muslim Sepoys. From the point of view of civilian participation, the Revolt assumed a truly national character only in the Oudh region. But in point of fact, nationalism, as we know it, had not yet been born in India. From the geographical aspect it must be admitted that a large part of the country was not touched by the Revolt at all. The Madras Presidency was entirely free of it. In the Bombay Presidency it appeared in a mild form in the Maharashtra region only. In Bengal the Sepoys had not been able to draw the sympathy either of the educated class or of the commoners. Newly annexed Punjab remained loyal to the British. Only in U.P. and Bihar and parts of Central India was the revolt a partial temporary success.

The Sepoys wanted to drive out the English and re-establish the Mughal empire. From their angle the Revolt may be regarded as a war of independence. But the Revolt really began in defence of religion and traditional social customs. It was not based on any clear-cut political objective or idealism. It was dominated by feudal outlook and narrow private interests. India's new culture and economy were hardly consistent with *padshahi* and feudal system.

Various causes contributed to the failure of the Revolt. Except Oudh, nowhere it developed into a national uprising.

At other places it was more a revolt of the Sepoys, having little or no intimate connection with the people. The Sikhs of the Punjab not only did not join it; they actively helped the English put it down. The Indian Princes almost without exception supported the English. Sir Dinkar Rao, Sindhia's minister, and Sir Salar Jang, the Nizam's minister, rendered much help to the British. The Gurkha chieftain of Nepal, Sir Jang Bahadur, took a major

Was the Revolt a national uprising?

Was the Revolt a War of Independence?

Causes of failure of the Revolt

part in suppressing the Revolt by sending Gurkha troops. On the north-western frontier Amir Dost Muhammad of Afghanistan was friendly to the British. In the absence of active help from the people it was not possible for the Sepoys to come out successful against the combined forces of the Company and the Indian Princes.

Secondly, the Sepoys operated in an isolated way in different areas. Their objectives and methods did not always tally. They could not employ their combined might at the same time against the English.

Thirdly, the military hardware (guns etc.) of the Sepoys was inferior in quality to that of the English.

Fourthly, their control over the telegraphic and postal services enabled the English to maintain links with the different regions. This was not possible for the Sepoys. It must also be remembered that from the point of view of military skill, the Sepoys lacked able leaders. Tantia Topi and Rani Lakshmi Bai were no doubt brave, but they had not the military experience and skill of the English generals like Campbell and Havelock.

Almost all the leaders of the revolt came to a tragic end. That valiant lady, Lakshmi Bai, gave up her life in the field of battle (June 1858). Tantia Topi was captured and executed. Nana Saheb fled to the jungles of Nepal. Bahadur Shah was exiled to Rangoon as a captive. With his death in 1862 the Mughals in India came to an end.

The Sepoy War put an end to the Company's rule in India. The leading men in England came to the conclusion that after such a major revolt, it would not be advisable to still keep the administration in the hands of the Company. So Queen Victoria of England herself assumed the reins of government in India. This was in accordance with the Government of India Act, 1858. The powers which previously were exercised by the Company's Court of Directors and the Board of Control were now entrusted

to a member of the British Cabinet. This minister came to be known as the Secretary of State for India. The Governor-General was given the title of 'Viceroy'.

Another notable result of the Sepoy War was the reorganisation of the army. The number of European troops was increased. The Sepoy units were composed of soldiers from all classes and races so as to prevent the growth of unity among them. The artillery was placed in charge of Europeans only, so that in case of any further revolt in future the strength of the Sepoys would be severely limited.

In order to reassure her Indian subjects Queen Victoria issued a Proclamation in 1858. It was declared that Government would not interfere in religious affairs or social customs, that Indians would be eligible for appointment to high posts according to qualification, that all treaties and obligations of the Company would be scrupulously observed, and that Lord Dalhousie's policy of annexation would be given up. The suspicions among the Indians which had paved the way for the Sepoy War were thus sought to be removed.

Model Questions

1. What were the causes and consequences of the 'Sepoy Mutiny'?
2. What were the causes of the 'Sepoy Mutiny'? What changes in the administration of India resulted from the 'Mutiny'?
3. Write short note on—Queen Victoria's Proclamation.

CHAPTER 32

Expansion in the East

Singapore : In order to facilitate trade with China and the East Indies the Company leased Singapore in 1819. Sir Stamford Raffles cleared this area of jungles and marshes and transformed it into a great centre of commerce and a strategically important military base. In 1830 Singapore was connected.

with Penang and Malacca. Gradually it became the biggest naval base of England in the East.

Conquest of Burma : In the second half of the 18th century a powerful kingdom arose in Burma under the dynasty founded by Alaungpaya. Arakan and Manipur in the east were annexed to this kingdom. The *Mags* of Arakan began to enter the Chittagong district in Bengal, then under the Company, in order to escape the cruelty of the Burmese King. The troubles on the Chittagong-Arakan frontier reached their climax at the time of Lord Amherst (1823-1828). The Burmese troops cap-

tured the island of Shahpuri near Chittagong. Meanwhile hostilities had also begun on the

First Burmese War :

1. Causes
2. Results

Assam-Bengal frontier. Taking advantage of the weakness of the Ahom Kings, Burmese troops had attacked Cachar and Jaintia after occupying the Brahmaputra Valley. Minor clashes on both the frontiers developed into the First Burmese War (1824-1826). The British forces were at first defeated at Ramu, but later they occupied South Burma and advanced up to the areas near the Burmese capital, Amarapura. The vanquished Burmese King was forced to come to terms by the treaty of Yandabo (1826). The Ahom kingdom in the Brahmaputra Valley and the kingdoms of Cachar, Jaintia and Manipur came under the authority of the Company. Moreover, two provinces in Burma itself—Arakan and Tenasserim—were ceded to the Company. The Burmese King also agreed to pay Rs. 1 crore as war compensation. After a few years the Company's direct rule was established in the Brahmaputra Valley (Assam), Cachar and Jaintia. The ruler of Manipur was placed under the protection of the Company.

The Second Burmese War occurred at the time of Lord Dalhousie as a result of commercial disputes. Some English traders in Burma had been ill-treated by the Burmese authorities. As negotiations did not settle the issue, war began (1852). Within a few months British forces occupied South Burma. As the Burmese King refused to enter into a treaty, Lord Dal-

Second Burmese War :
Causes and results

housie issued a Proclamation bringing the province of Pegu under the Company's rule.



The independent kingdom of Burma (North Burma) came under the rule of the English when Lord Dufferin was the Governor-General of India. Some political and commercial disputes were going on between the English and the Burmese for a long time. The Burmese King, Thibaw, was immature

in age. He had no experience of diplomacy and administrative work. He made the English suspicious by trying to enter into diplomatic relations with France, for, at that time, England and France were rivals in the sphere of expansion of their colonial possessions.

Third Burmese War

At last war was declared against Thibaw for alleged ill-treatment of an English business firm (1885). This is known as the Third Burmese War. The British captured Mandalay, the Burmese capital, almost without any resistance. Thibaw was exiled. His kingdom came under the rule of the English (1886). Thus, as a result of three wars, the whole of Burma was annexed by the British in three phases and made part of British India.

Model Question :

Give a brief account of the expansion of British power in Burma.

CHAPTER 33

Rise of Nationalism

Lord Lytton's policy of repression : Lord Lytton's imperialism was reflected not only in the Second Afghan War. In 1876 there was a terrible famine in India. Ignoring totally the tragic undertones of this calamity, a Darbar was held at Delhi in 1877 with great pomp and splendour. There Queen Victoria was declared 'Empress of India'. The Arms Act forbade Indians to use arms except with licence. The Vernacular Press Act was passed to muzzle the Indian Press, so that it might not expose to the people the misdeeds of the Government. The qualifying age for the Indian Civil Service examination held in London was reduced to nineteen. This practically barred the entry of the Indians to the I.C.S.

Reforms of Lord Ripon : Lord Ripon did not follow Lord Lytton's policy of repression. He brought the Second

Afghan War to a close. His administration (1880-1884) is notable for various internal reforms.

In 1881, a Census was conducted all over India. This yielded valuable information about the social and economic conditions in the country. The practice of conducting census every ten years was initiated at the time of Lord Ripon. Lord Ripon introduced a Factory Act with a view to reducing the working hours of children in factories. He reorganised the revenue and agriculture departments and took various steps for improvement of agriculture. In order to protect the interests of the peasants against the Zamindars, Lord Ripon prepared the draft of an Act relating to tenancy rights. This became an Act at the time of the next Governor-General, Lord Dufferin. In 1882 Lord Ripon reduced the duty on salt and abolished altogether the duty on textiles. This was a great relief to the poorer classes of people. Lord Ripon allowed the Indian Press a free voice in all matters by abolishing the Vernacular Press Act. He set up the Hunter Commission with a view to improving primary education and accelerating spread of education among the backward classes.

At the time of Lord Ripon Indians with western education were eager for political rights. Lord Ripon was perceptive enough to appreciate this change in the mental climate of the Indians. Unlike the average Englishman, he did not reveal a narrow political outlook by either ridiculing this trend or suppressing it. He extended the sphere of local self-government with a view to making the Indians fit for political rights. In this matter he followed the policy of Lord Mayo. In a resolution adopted in 1881 Lord Ripon expressed the desire to leave to self-governing institutions those matters in which people were directly interested and which they could themselves manage quite efficiently. In terms of this resolution the Bengal Municipal Act, 1884, was passed. This further democratised the procedure for election of representatives by the tax-payers. The municipalities were also given the right to elect an unofficial President. Lord Ripon was interested not

Local
Self-Government

only in urban self-government ; he set up a District Board in each district and Local Boards in sub-divisions. These measures gave the people partial rights in respect of such matters of interest to themselves as elementary education, road-building, public health etc.

In those days there were various discriminations between Europeans and Indians in the judicial department. Even top-ranking Indian judges could not try Europeans in criminal cases. In order to do away with such discrimination, Mr. Ilbert, the Law Member in the Governor-General's Executive Council, prepared with the approval of Lord Ripon the draft of an Act. This was the famous Ilbert Bill. It was particularly satisfying for the Indians, but the Europeans began a clamour against it. Lord Ripon was in the end forced to compromise ; it was decided that in case of trial of Europeans by

Indian judges in criminal matters, the accused Ilbert Bill would have the right to claim an all-European jury. The movement for and against the Ilbert Bill kept the racial hatred between Europeans and Indians alive for a long time. It marked a stage in the history of the national movement in India.

Birth and growth of Nationalism : Among the educated classes in India in the first half of the 19th century the feeling of hatred towards British rule had not yet arisen. Rather the sentiment was strong that English rule was good for India, that it was a blessing of God. Many are inclined to regard the Sepoy War as the first Indian war of independence. But this first major revolt against the English rule did not get the backing of the educated classes in India.

Due to the spread of higher education through the Universities, nationalism, in its true sense, was born and began gradually to grow among the educated classes.

Effects of western education In actual fact, it is the introduction of western education which gave rise to the national movement. Intimate acquaintance with the writings of Burke, Bentham, Mill, Macaulay and other English authors inspired Indians with an indomitable urge for freedom. Revolutions in

different countries of Europe, particularly the Italian struggle for unity and nationalism, provided inspiration to educated Indians from the time of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Keshab Chandra Sen, Dayananda Saraswati, Swami Vivekananda and other great thinkers and religious leaders inspired educated Indians with the will to freedom. Freedom was considered a 'must' not only on political

Economic factors grounds; there were economic reasons also.

In Bengal the European indigo-planters were making the life of the peasants a hell on earth. In the interest of the English manufacturers the economic foundations of Indian industry and commerce were being systematically destroyed. Highly educated and talented young men of the rising middle-class had no right to high posts in Government service. In the social sphere also, there were discriminations

Social resentment which created a spirit of hatred between the rulers and the ruled. Even highly educated Indians were not given by the English the status due to them. Political mastery found expression in social customs and even in private conduct. The position in this respect became more intolerable after the Sepoy War.

Indian National Congress: In the early stage of the development of nationalism some political organisations played an important role. The 'Zamindar Sabha' founded by 'Prince' Dwaraka Nath Tagore and the 'British India Society' founded by the new English-educated class merged in 1853 to form one organisation known as the 'British India Association'. Later, Dadabhai Naoroji took the lead in founding the 'Bombay Association.' At Poona the 'Sarabjanik Sabha' was set up under the leadership of Ranade. In Madras there was the 'Native Association'. In 1876 was founded in Calcutta the 'Indian Association' under the leadership of Surendranath Banerjea.

Surendranath Banerjea was the first to come forward with the idea of inspiring the political organisations scattered all over India with the same spirit and the same ideal. Forced to

leave the Indian Civil Service on flimsy grounds, he had known, through his own experience, how reluctant the English authorities were to appoint Indians to high posts. The age-limit for the I.C.S., fixed anew at the time of Lord Lytton, made it almost impossible for Indians to enter the Service. Surendranath began a strong movement against this provision through the media of press and platform. Lord Lytton's move to throttle the Press created great resentment among the politically conscious and educated Indians. Surendranath addressed gatherings in the principal cities of North India—in Banaras, Allahabad, Kanpur, Lucknow, Aligarh, Agra, Delhi, Amritsar, Lahore and other places—and thus initiated the building up of a vigorous public opinion on an all-India scale. At his call delegates from all over India assembled at a 'National Conference' in 1883.

The Indian National Congress was founded in 1885 with a view to voicing the political demands of the Indians through the platform of an all-India organisation. The lead was taken by a liberal-minded English official, Allan Octavian

Birth of Congress Hume. He wanted to create good relations between the ruler and the ruled. It was in the interest of the English rulers to try to ensure that political thinking in India did not go against the British rule and that there was at least a minimum of understanding of Government policies among the educated classes. The first Congress session was held in Bombay on the 27th December, 1885. Mr. W. C. Bonnerjee, a well-known Bengali Barrister, was in the chair. Only 70 delegates attended this Congress session. Later, the Congress gained gradually in membership and influence.

During the first few years after its birth, the Congress would have been quite pleased with a minimum of political rights. Nobody then dreamed of full independence. The Congress was the forum of appeals and petitions to the British Government. But in the early years of the 20th century an extremist group arose in the Congress under the leadership of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal and others. Even moderate

Policy of Congress

rates like Dadabhai Naoroji demanded 'Swaraj'. The changing times and the narrow outlook of the Government made the Congress gradually dream of a free India.

Lord Curzon (1899-1905): At the time of the birth of the Congress, the Governor-General in India was Lord Dufferin. The Indian Councils Act (1892) came into force in the time of the next Governor-General, Lord Lansdowne (1888-1894). This Act increased somewhat the membership and power of the Central and Provincial Legislative Councils. The next Governor-General was Lord Elgin II (1894-1899) who was succeeded by Lord Curzon (1899-1905).

The administration of Lord Curzon occupies, for a number of reasons, a prominent place in the history of India. Few, if any, Governors-General of India could equal him in learning, oratory and political insight.

Estimate of Lord Curzon

He had extraordinary capacity as an administrator. He had special experience of international politics. He gave evidence of his farsightedness in his foreign policy. Yet he could not sympathise with Indian aspirations. He was an incorrigible imperialist. That is why he gained no popularity in this country. His Governor-Generalship is regarded in Indian history as an age of reaction.

Lord Curzon separated several districts from the Punjab on the north-west frontier of India and with these formed a new province, the North-West Frontier Province, in 1901. This made it easier for the Government of India to conduct its frontier policy.

Lord Curzon took steps to ensure continuance of English predominance in Persia. He sent an expedition to Tibet (1903-1904). His primary purpose was to resist increase of Russian influence in Persia and Tibet.

Curzon's foreign policy

During the early years of the British period—at the time of Warren Hastings—political relations began between Tibet and the English. In the second half of the 18th century the Gurkhas of Nepal attacked Tibet. The Tibetans beat them back with Chinese help. They suspected that the English had helped

the Gurkhas and became angry with the English. As a result, the English were forbidden entry into Tibet and Indian trade with Tibet almost dried up.

In the 19th century Chinese suzerainty was established over Tibet. The Chinese Government was not at all pleased with England. During the century England fought China twice and established control over some Chinese ports. With the establishment of Chinese suzerainty over Tibet, all relations between Tibet and British India were naturally cut off. In 1893, however, the Chinese Government gave the Indian Government certain commercial rights in Tibet by a treaty.

The terms of the treaty entered into by China were not acceptable to the Tibetans. So they began to resist in various ways English commerce in Tibet. In 1895 China was defeated in the Sino-Japanese War and became gradually weaker. Tibet seized this opportunity to make itself almost free.

When Lord Curzon was the Governor-General of India, the English, for various reasons, considered it possible that the Russians might try to establish their influence in Tibet. Any possible Russian influence over Afghanistan, Central Asia and Tibet would have threatened the security of the British empire in India. To prevent such a development Lord Curzon sent an expedition to Tibet under Colonel Younghusband (1903). Ignoring the protests and resistance of the Tibetans, the expedition reached Lhasa. Dalai Lama, the head of the Tibetan Government, took shelter in Mongolia. The victorious British forces compelled the Tibetans to sign a treaty in 1904. This treaty established British political influence over Tibet and created trading opportunities.

Lord Curzon did not lend vigour to foreign policy only. His tenure of office saw many administrative changes, too. He passed the Punjab Land Alienation Act in order to protect the interests of the peasants against the money-lenders. He founded Co-operative Credit Societies to help improve financial condition of the people. An Imperial Agricultural Department and a

Relation of the
British with Tibet

Curzon's expe-
dition to Tibet

Public utility
measures

Department of Commerce and Industry were set up for improvement in agriculture as well as industry and commerce. The irrigation system was improved and several thousand miles of railway lines laid. Reforms were introduced in the Police Department and steps were taken to employ educated young men of good families to high posts in the department. Lord Curzon served the interests of the people in general by reducing the duty on salt and that of the middle class by scaling down the rates of income tax.

Lord Curzon was a patron of learning. He passed an Act for the preservation of the great monuments of India's past.

Patronage of
learning

A great scholar, Sir John Marshall, was appointed Director-General of the Archaeological Survey of India. The Imperial Library (now National Library) of Calcutta was founded in his time. But educated Indians could not approve of his attempt at controlling higher education through the Indian Universities Act of 1904. This Act placed the Universities under the control of the Government.

Partition of Bengal and Swadeshi Movement : In 1905 Lord Curzon arranged the partition of Bengal on the pretext of administrative convenience. At that time the province of Bengal, including Bengal-Bihar-Orissa, was under a Lieutenant-Governor. It was quite difficult for a single administrator to look after all the affairs of such a large province with the necessary efficiency. Lord Curzon joined together West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa into a single province known as 'Bengal'. East

Partition of
Bengal

Bengal and North Bengal were joined with Assam and made a separate province called 'Eastern Bengal and Assam', with its capital at Dacca. One province became a Hindu-majority area, and the other a Muslim-majority area. The Muslim majority in East Bengal and Assam supported this partition of Bengal, while the Hindus protested against the partition of their motherland. In this way the policy of Lord Curzon sowed the seeds of conflict between the two communities.

The nationalist leaders declared that the partition of Bengal

was decided upon with the intention of making the Bengalees weak and thus strike at the root of their political demands. A vigorous resistance movement began all over India against this move. The nationalist movement gradually gained in strength. Surendranath Banerjea launched a vigorous propaganda both in India and England against partition of Bengal. Rabindranath Tagore and Rajani Kanta Sen inspired the people of Bengal by composing patriotic songs. The Bengalees derived new strength from the inspiring speeches of Bipin Chandra Pal, the extremist Congress leader. Nationalist Muslim leaders like Abdul Rasul, Liaquat Hossain, Mujibar Rahman joined this movement.

One of the more notable features of this movement was the move for non-co-operation with England in the economic sphere. It was resolved to replace foreign goods and foreign education with Swadeshi (national) goods and Swadeshi education. This is known as the Swadeshi Movement. Boycott of English textiles gave an impetus to the Indian textile industry. Quite a number of textile mills cropped up. The establishment of Swadeshi banks, insurance companies, workshops and factories for manufacture of articles of daily use opened fresh paths to economic development in the country. A National Council of Education was founded in 1906 to arrange for Swadeshi education. The Swadeshi movement ushered in revolutionary changes in the life and thought of the people of Bengal. At last, in 1911, Emperor George V announced at the Darbar at Delhi the repeal of the partition of Bengal.

Differences inside Congress : The Congress was a small organisation towards the close of the 19th century. It was not opposed to English rule, but believed in the policy of gaining small political concessions through appeals and petitions. Gradually the Congress gained in popularity and membership. The varied grievances of the people of this country began to be reflected in the deliberations of the Congress. Under the leadership of Lokamanya Tilak one section of the Congress wanted to give up the policy of appeals and petitions and take to the path of struggle.

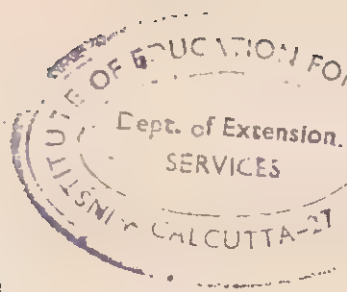
Extremists and moderates

They became known as the 'Extremists'. Tilak's associates in Bengal and the Punjab respectively were Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai. Surendranath Banerjea in Bengal, Gopalkrishna Gokhale in Maharashtra, Ferozeshah Mehta of Bombay and others wanted the policy of appeals and petitions to continue as before. They became known as 'Moderates'. At the time of Lord Curzon the differences between the two sections developed into open disputes. At the Surat session of the Congress in 1907 these disputes reached a climax. The Extremists left the Congress. Naturally Moderates now dominated it.

Rise of Terrorism : When the Swadeshi movement became strong as a result of the partition of Bengal, Indian nationalism found a new programme of action. Following the example of the revolutionaries in Europe, some revolutionary groups arose in India. They dreamed of independence through terrorism, i.e., murder of English officials. The Government tried to put down terrorism with a stern hand. Many Extremists as well as Moderates were locked up in jails. The Press was brought under control. Sometimes people were oppressed because they were suspected to have links with the terrorists. Terrorism was not limited to Bengal. It spread to the other provinces of India, particularly the Punjab.

Model Questions :

1. Summarise the measures of internal reform which are associated with the administration of Ripon.
2. Briefly describe Lord Ripon's services to India.
3. Give a brief account of the administration of Lord Curzon.
4. State the leading events of the administration of Lord Curzon.
5. Write short note on—Partition of Bengal.



CHAPTER 34

Reforms and Struggles

While the Congress was gaining in strength as the mouth-piece of Indian nationalism, a large section of the Muslim community kept away from it under the leadership of Sir Syed Ahmed. In the first half of the 19th century, the Muslims opposed to the British had joined the Wahabi movement. During the Sepoy War, they again took up arms against the British. In the second half of the 19th century the Muslims gave up this militant policy and took the path of co-operation with Government under the influence of leaders like Sir Syed Ahmed, Nawab Abdul Latif and Syed Amir Ali. The educated Hindus, fired with nationalism, were meanwhile taking the path of opposition to the English. So the Government began to show preference to the Muslims as against the Hindus. The Hindu-Muslim conflict thus came into prominence as a result of British policy.

During the early stage of the introduction of western education in India the Muslims had not come forward to be educated in English. As a result, in the field of education as well as that of Government service, they were quite backward as compared to the Hindus. Sir Syed Ahmed was in favour of English education. He founded a college at Aligarh for the Muslims as a centre of western education.

Aligarh
Movement

Later, this developed into the Aligarh University. The college did not restrict itself to providing education; it became a hotbed of communal politics in India. Many of those associated with the college were in favour of a split with the Hindus. They thereby aimed at securing favours from the English in the spheres of politics and Government service.

Muslim League: After the resignation of Lord Curzon,

the office of Governor-General was conferred upon Lord Minto. II. Under him (1906-1910) Muslim politics assumed a definite shape under the patronage of Government. On October 1, 1906, some Muslim leaders headed by the Aga Khan, the religious chief of the Khoja sect, saw Lord Minto at Simla and demanded separate electorate for the Muslims. Separate Electorate Lord Minto assured them of his sympathetic consideration of this demand. Later, at the time of Minto-Morley Reforms the British Government approved and accepted this proposal. In actual fact, the Aga Khan had raised the demand at the instigation of the British themselves. Its aim was to keep six crores of Muslims at a distance from the Congress and ensure their continued loyalty to the English.

Shortly after the meeting between Lord Minto and the Aga Khan, Muslim leaders from different parts of India gathered together at a conference at Dacca in December, 1907. As a result of the partition of Bengal, Dacca, as the capital of the Muslim-majority province of Eastern Bengal and Assam, had gained a new political importance. This conference founded the 'All-India Muslim League'. It was the political objective of the Muslim League to be fully loyal to the English and to further the interests of the Muslim community under the patronage of Government. In this way the Muslim League became the refuge of the communalist Muslims. The British Government nurtured the League by showing favours to it with the object of weakening the Congress.

Minto-Morely Reforms (1909): Though the Indian Councils Act of 1892 had somewhat extended the political rights of the Indians, they had really no control over the administration. Discontent was, therefore, growing. In spite of the differences between the Extremists and the Moderates, the influence of the Congress was on the increase. The demand that the Congress raised for extension of the political rights of the Indians could not be altogether ignored.

by the British Government. Lord Morley, the Secretary of State for India, and Lord Minto together paved the path for a dose of reforms. In 1909 the British Parliament passed another Indian Councils Act.

(1) This Act increased the membership of the Imperial Legislative Council and the Provincial Legislative Councils. At the same time the people were given the right to elect a few members directly,

(2) Though the system of election was made more broad-based, it was at the same time so restricted that it became quite difficult to reflect the people's voice inside the Councils. Separate or Communal Electorates were introduced. It was decided that representatives of the Muslims would be elected by the Muslims only, whereas the representatives of all other communities would be elected by the combined votes of all the communities except the Muslims.

(3) The powers of the Legislative Councils were increased. The members were given the right to bring up resolutions in respect of the Budget and matters relating to the administration and also to cast votes on such resolutions.

(4) Executive Councils were sought to be introduced in some provinces under Lieutenant-Governors. Such Executive Councils were set up in Bengal in 1909 and in Bihar-Orissa in 1912.

The Minto-Morley reforms were not confined to composition and functions of the Legislative Council. Until now no Indian member had been included either in the Council of the Secretary of State for India or in the Executive Councils



Morley



Minto

of the Governor-General and the Governors. In 1907 two Indian members (Sir K. G. Gupta and Syed Hussain Bilgrami) were admitted to the India Council. In 1909 an Indian

(Sir S. P. Sinha, later Lord Sinha) was admitted to membership of the Governor-General's Executive Council. In the same year Kishorilal Goswami was included in the newly established Executive Council in Bengal.

These reforms of the British Government could not weaken the Indian national movement. The Congress had already raised the demand for Swaraj (independence). But the British Government was not prepared to concede even partial responsible government to India. Even after the Minto-Morley reforms Government had the power to ignore the views of the Indian members in the Legislative Councils. Thus the Minto-Morley Reforms could not act as sop on the growing political discontent in India.

Lord Hardinge II (1910-1915): At the time of Lord Hardinge, the successor of Lord Minto, there was a Darbar at Delhi on the occasion of the visit of Emperor George V. There the Emperor announced repeal of the partition of Bengal. Lord Curzon's "settled fact" was unsettled. West and East Bengal were reunited. Bihar and Orissa together formed a new province. Assam became a separate province. The capital of India was transferred from Calcutta to Delhi. Through all these measures the British Government admitted the importance of the movement against the partition of Bengal.

The First World War began in Europe in 1914 when Lord Hardinge was the Governor-General in India. It ended in

1918 at the time of Lord Chelmsford, the next Governor-General. In this war India helped England with men and money.

New political movement : After the open split with the Extremists at the Surat Congress in 1907 the Moderates had gained complete control over the Congress. The Extremists were led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak in Maharashtra, Lala Lajpat Rai in the Punjab and Bipin Chandra Pal in Bengal. After the period of his exile in Burma was over, Tilak returned to India in 1914 and joined the Home Rule Movement.

Home Rule
Movement

Following the example of Ireland, the movement was started in India by Mrs. Annie Besant. But it was Tilak's leadership which transformed it into an all-India movement. This movement started the healing process of a reunion of the Extremists and the Moderates inside the Congress.

In 1916 the annual sessions of the Congress and the Muslim League were held at Lucknow at the same time. The extre-

minists and the Moderates in the Congress were reunited. The Congress and the Muslim

Lucknow
Pact

League made a pact (Lucknow Pact) regarding the policy to be adopted in case of introduction of administrative reforms in future. It was decided to conduct a united political movement on the basis of this agreement. In the history of the national movement in India the Lucknow Pact occupies an important place.

Declaration of Montagu :

There was a great deal of speculation about the possible changes in the administrative set-up in India after the end of the First World War. On August 20, 1917, Mr. Edwin Montagu, the Secretary of State for India, declared : "The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in



Montagu

complete accord, is that of increasing the association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government as an integral part of the British Empire". The Government of India Act, 1919, was passed in order to translate this policy into action. The administrative reforms, introduced by this Act, are known as "Mont-Ford Reforms".

Mont-Ford Reforms : Government of India Act, 1919 :



Lord Chelmsford

This Act came into force in 1921 and remained in force till the 31st March, 1937. Some of the provisions of this Act relating to the Central Government remained operative till 1947.

(1) The members of the Council of the Secretary of State for India India Council were reduced in number and in some matters the powers of the Secretary of State were reduced.

(2) A high official, the 'High Commissioner', was appointed to look after the Indian students in England, to purchase Government stores, to arrange payment of salaries and pensions of Government officials and for other purposes.

(3) The different branches of administration were divided. The Defence Department, the Railways, the Postal Services etc. remained with the Government of India ; maintenance of law and order in the provinces, judicial matters, local self-government, agriculture and industry, education, health etc. were entrusted to the Provincial Governments.

(4) The Governor-General's Executive Council comprised seven members. Of them, three were to be Indians. Each

member was given the charge of one department. The Foreign and Political Departments remained in direct charge of the Governor-General himself. The members of the Executive Council were to be nominated 'members of the Legislative Assembly or the Council of State at the Centre, but they were not to be responsible to the Assembly or the Council. As before, they remained responsible to the Governor-General and the Secretary of State for India. Thus the Mont-Ford Reforms did not actually introduce responsible government at the Centre.

(5) A legislative body, composed of two Houses, was established for making laws applicable to all parts of India. The Upper House was known as the 'Council of State' and the Lower House as the 'Legislative Assembly'. The Council of State had 60 members. Of them, 34 were to be elected by the people and 26 nominated by the Governor-General. The Legislative Assembly consisted of 145 members. Of them, 105 were to be elected by the people and 40 nominated by the Governor-General. Communal Electorates remained. Usually laws were enacted and taxes imposed with the approval of both the Houses. However, if the Governor-General considered it necessary, he could ignore the opinion of both the Houses and enact laws and impose taxes at his discretion.

(6) In 1919 only Bengal, Madras and Bombay were Governor's provinces. The heads of the other provinces were known either as Lieutenant-Governors or Chief Commissioners. The heads of Bihar-Orissa, the Central Provinces and Berar, the United Provinces, the Punjab, Assam and Burma were made Governors under the Mont-Ford Reforms. A few years later, the Chief Commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province was also made a Governor.

(7) In the provinces under the Governors the system known as 'Dyarchy' was introduced. Some branches of administration (e.g., Law and Order, Budget, Revenue) remained under the control of the members of the

Governor's Executive Council as before. They were nominated members of the Provincial Legislative Assembly, but not responsible to it. They were accountable to the Governor, the Governor-General and the Secretary of State for India. Education, Health, Local Self-Government, Agriculture and Industry—all these departments were entrusted to Indian Ministers. They were appointed by the Governor from among the elected members of the Legislative Assembly and were responsible to it. If the Legislative Assembly did not approve any of their policies or specific actions they had to resign. Thus responsible government was introduced in respect of the departments under the Ministers. The departments which remained under the control of the members of the Executive Council were known as 'Reserved Departments' and those under the Ministers were known as 'Transferred Departments'. This system of provincial dyarchy was abolished with the coming into effect from 1st April, 1937, of the Government of India Act, 1935.

(8) There was a Legislative Assembly in every province under a Governor. The elected members were greater in number than the nominated members. The Assembly had authority over the Ministers and the Transferred Departments, but not over the members of the Executive Council and the Reserved Departments.

Policy of repression: Even before the Mont-Ford Reforms, the British Government was trying to crush nationalist aspirations through a policy of stern repression.

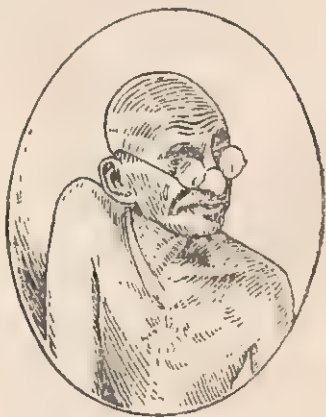
Rowlatt Act In 1919 the notorious Rowlatt Act gave Government Draconian powers. They could, now, for example, send anybody to jail without trial; anybody could be sentenced in accordance with procedure not covered by normal laws of the land.

In protest against the Rowlatt Act Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and other leaders resigned their membership of the Indian Legislative Assembly. A strong movement began all over India under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. On the 13th April, 1919, occurred the horrible massacre of Jallinwallah Bagh at Amritsar in the Punjab. Under the orders of

General Dyer the unarmed and peaceful gathering in that park was mowed down with bullets. When the shooting stopped, hundreds lay dead and hundreds more wounded. Martial Law was declared in the Punjab and unheard-of repression let loose on the people. Rabindranath Tagore gave up his Knighthood (the title 'Sir') to take his place by the side of the oppressed humanity of India.

A new leader : Mahatma Gandhi : Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born at Porbandar in Gujarat on October 2, 1869. He went to England at an early age and became a Barrister-at-Law. In 1893 he went to South Africa to practise law. There he entered politics as the mouthpiece of the oppressed Indian community. He adopted a new policy to protest against the repression of the European rulers. This is known as non-violent *Satyagraha*. The essence of this policy is that violence can be won over by non-violence, not by counter-violence.

After his partial success in the non-violent struggle in South Africa Gandhiji returned to India in 1915. He was given the title of 'Mahatma' by Rabindranath Tagore. He led the strike of the Ahmedabad workers as also the peasant movements of Gujarat and Champaran in Bihar, applying the policy of non-violent *Satyagraha* in all these cases. During the First World War he was in favour of assisting England, then in mortal danger, without any condition. Unlike the Extremist leaders such as Tilak, he did not demand self-government for India as the price of such help. But he voiced strong protest against the policy of repression on the part of Government. He took the lead in forming the 'Satyagraha League' against the Rowlatt Act.



Mahatma Gnadhi

He was arrested, but his policy of Satyagraha became increasingly popular.

Khilafat Movement : As the religious head of the Muslim world, the Caliph of Turkey, joined Germany against England in the First World War, many Muslim leaders in India openly opposed the British Government. Turkey was defeated in the war and by a treaty signed in 1920, the victorious allies seized the Caliph's domains in Western Asia. Taking this as an insult and injustice to the Caliph, the Indian Muslims began the 'Khilafat Movement'. It was led by eminent Muslim leaders such as Maulana Muhammad Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali. With a view to establishing Hindu-Muslim unity Mahatma Gandhi made the Khilafat Movement a part of the national movement led by the Congress.

Prelude to struggle : In September, 1920, a special session of the Congress was held in Calcutta with Jala Lajput Rai as the President. This session adopted Gandhiji's programme of 'Non-Violent Non-Co-operation'. The Congress had outgrown the phase of appeals and petitions and was now ready to take the path of direct action. The weapon of this non-violent struggle against the British was non-violent non-co-operation in different forms, such as renunciation of all official honours and titles, boycott of the legislative bodies, courts, schools and colleges etc.

In December, 1920, at the annual session of the Congress at Nagpur, the programme of direct action adopted at the Calcutta Congress was approved. Hitherto the aim of the Congress was the attainment of "colonial self-government". Now "attainment of Swaraj through peaceful and legitimate means" became its goal. The national movement in India advanced towards its new goal under its new leader with new tactics. The new leader was Mahatma Gandhi, the new tactics the method of non-violent non-co-operation and the new goal, "attainment of Swaraj", though 'Swaraj' still did not mean full independence outside the British Empire.

Model Questions :

1. Sketch the principal features of Minto-Morley Reforms.
2. Summarise the main changes connected with Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms.
3. Write notes—(a) Lucknow Pact: (b) Home Rule Movement; (c) Khilafat Movement.

CHAPTER 35

March to Freedom

Non-Co-Operation Movement : With the adoption of the programme of non-co-operation at the Calcutta and Nagpur sessions of the Congress Gandhiji became the undisputed leader of the national movement. Among the old guards Tilak died in 1920 while Surendranath Banerjee, Bipin Chandra Pal and others could not reconcile themselves to the policy of direct action and left the Congress. The principal associates of Gandhiji were Deshbandhu C. R. Das, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Lala Lajpat Rai, Maulana Shaukat Ali and others. The non-co-operation and the Khilafat movements ran parallel. There was unity among the Hindus and the Muslims for the time being. Boycott of the courts and the schools and colleges continued. Picketing was resorted to against the purchase of wine and foreign goods. The use of Swadeshi products became widespread. Altogether there was an air of intense expectancy, as at the time of the Swadeshi movement. But in 1922 Gandhiji, noticing certain signs of violence in the non-co-operation movement, suddenly withdrew it.

In 1923 Turkey became a Republic under the leadership of Kemal Ataturk. The Caliph was deposed and his post abolished. It was then no use continuing the Khilafat movement in India.

Thus both the non-co-operation and the Khilafat Movements came to a premature end.

Swarajist Party : After coming out of prison on the

withdrawal of the non-co-operation movement Deshbandhu C. R. Das and Pandit Motilal Nehru formed the 'Swarajist' Party. They now gave up the policy of boycotting the Legislature, the policy adopted at the Calcutta session of the Congress. The Swarajists wanted to enter the Legislatures formed under the Government of India Act, 1919, and carry on their policy of opposition to Government from inside. They did not leave the Congress formally, but they had basic differences with the Gandhites in the Congress. Though the Gandhites had withdrawn the non-co-operation movement, they were not prepared to enter the Legislatures. Due to the opposition of the Swarajists, no stable Ministry could be formed in some of the provinces including Bengal. Though they could not paralyse the administration, the Swarajists were able to voice the resentment of the people against the Mont-Ford Reforms.

Simon Commission : The Government of India Act, 1919, had provided for a review of the situation by a Commission after the Act had been in force for ten years with a view to deciding if the act required any amendment. In view of the growing seriousness of the political movement in India, a Commission was set up even before the period of ten years was over. In 1927 a Commission was formed with seven members of the British Parliament. A veteran of the legal profession in England and a former member of the Cabinet, Sir John Simon, became its President. As the Simon Commission did not include any Indian member, it created great resentment in India. When the Commission arrived in India the Congress refused to co-operate with it. The Commission completed its findings with the co-operation of other parties and its report was published in 1930.

Round Table Conference : Civil Disobedience Movement : As proposed by the Simon Commission, the British Government summoned a Round Table Conference in London in 1930 with a view to discussing reforms in the administrative set-up of India. Different political parties in England and India were requested to send their representatives to the Conference. The Indian Princes were

First Round

Table Conference

also allowed representation. But the Congress did not join it and, instead, started the Civil Disobedience Movement under Gandhiji's leadership (1930-1931). This was the second phase of the non-co-operation movement. Gandhiji himself violated the Salt Law as a signal for the start of the movement. The principal Congress leaders and thousands of Congress workers were sent behind the bars.

In 1931 this movement was withdrawn on the mediation of the Governor-General, Lord Irwin. The Congress leaders were released and Mahatma Gandhi joined the second session of the Round Table Conference as the sole representative of the Congress. But he returned to India with empty hands as he could not submit to the demands of the communalist Muslims and their British patrons (1931). The Civil Disobedience Movement was again started under his leadership (1932). He was sent to prison within a short period. Lord Willingdon, who succeeded Lord Irwin as Governor-General, resorted to a stern policy of repression. In 1934 Mahatma Gandhi withdrew the Civil Disobedience Movement.

Meanwhile, the third session of the Round Table Conference had been held in London in 1932. The Congress was not represented in it nor were any of its demands accepted by it. Rather, to ensure the permanence of the Hindu-Muslim differences, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, the Prime Minister of England, published what is known as the 'Communal Award.' This Award fixed the number of representatives to be elected by each community to the Central and Provincial Legislatures. It also allowed the Hindus of the Depressed Classes or the Scheduled Castes to elect their representatives separately from the Caste Hindus. Fearing that this provision, if put into effect, would divide the Hindus and weaken them, Mahatma Gandhi went on fast to prevent its coming into effect. As a result, the Poona Pact made some changes in the Award.

Government of India Act, 1935 : The British Parliament passed the Government of India Act, 1935, on the basis of the decisions of the Round Table Conference. This Act introduced various changes in the administrative system of India. The control of the British Parliament over India remained as before ; Indians were not given the right to devise their own Constitution. However, the powers which the Secretary of State for India was enjoying so long in respect of the internal affairs of India were now somewhat reduced. Secondly, a Federation of the Provinces in British India and the Princely States was proposed. As the Indian Princes did not agree to

this proposal, the Federation never materialised. Thirdly, in case of a Federation, the Governor-General would have ruled it with the advice of a Council of Ministers. He was given various powers and responsibilities. This would have restricted the powers of the Council of Ministers and the Legislature. The Legislature would have been composed of two Houses and the rulers of the Princely State joining the Federation would have sent to it members nominated by them. As these provisions show, the proposed Federation would hardly have been democratic. All in all, the Indians were not at all satisfied over the nature of the Central authority proposed in the Act of 1935, for there was no scope for real self-government in it. The course of events did not allow this proposal to be carried into effect. Till the end of British rule on the 14th August, 1947, the administration at the Centre was conducted, more or less, in terms of the Act of 1919.

In the Provincial sphere, the Act of 1935 conceded some demands of the Indian people. Provincial Autonomy was introduced in eleven provinces under Governors.

As a result, the provinces were freed from Central control in various matters. But the powers of the Provincial Council of Ministers and the Provincial Legislature were restricted in many ways. The Ministers were appointed by the Governor and remained responsible to the Legislature for their policies and administrative functions.

Each province under a Governor had a Legislature. In some provinces—as in Bengal,—the Legislature had two Houses ; in other provinces it was a single-chamber body. All the members of the Lower House were elected representatives of the people. A few of the members of the Upper House were nominated by the Governor. The Act clearly laid down the subjects which were to be under the jurisdiction of the Provincial Legislature. The Governor was given various powers and responsibilities ; these naturally curbed the powers of the Council of Ministers and the Legislature in many ways.

The Act of 1935 set up a Federal Court at Delhi. Its main duty was to settle any dispute about interpretation of the provisions of the Act of 1935.

Major events, 1937-1947 : The provisions of the Act of 1935 relating to provincial administration came into force on the 1st April, 1937. On that date Burma was separated from India and Provincial Autonomy was introduced in eleven provinces (Bengal, Madras, Bombay, Sind, Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, the United Provinces, the Central Province and Berar, Bihar, Orissa, Assam). In the elections to the Provincial Legislatures the Congress secured majority in seven provinces out of eleven. The provinces where it failed to secure a majority were Bengal, Assam, Sind and the Punjab. In the seven Congress-majority provinces (Madras, Bombay, the Central Provinces, the United Provinces, Bihar, Orissa and North-West Frontier Province) Ministries were formed by it (1937). Later, a Congress Ministry was formed in Assam and a Congress-supported Ministry in Sind.

In September, 1939, with the outbreak of the Second World War between England and Germany, there was a change in the political scene in India. India became involved in the war as a part of the British Empire. The British Government did not even consider it necessary to consult the Indian Legislature and the Indian political parties before making India a party to the War. As it was now impossible to co-operate with

England in her imperialistic war, the Congress Ministers in the different provinces resigned.

Meanwhile, the Muslim League under the leadership of Mr. M. A. Jinnah was gaining in strength as the mouthpiece of the communalist Muslims. In the general election in 1937 the Muslim League had not been able to get an absolute majority in any of the provinces. In none of the provinces was there a League Ministry. But led by Mr. Jinnah, the Muslim League raised a hue and cry against the Congress Ministries. Its slogan that Muslim interests had become insecure under Hindu (Congress) rule was an open invitation to communalism in its most rapid form. When the Congress Ministers resigned in 1939 the Muslim League celebrated what it chose to call "Deliverance Day".

Then, as if to demolish the concept of Hindu-Muslim unity for ever, strong demands were made for establishment of 'Pakistan'. The word 'Pakistan' basically means 'holy land'. The demand for a separate

Demand for Pakistan State comprising the Muslim-majority areas in North-Western India (the Punjab, the tribal area in the North-Western Frontier, Kashmir, Sind and Baluchistan) had been voiced as far back as 1930-31. The proposed State was given the name of 'Pakistan'. Later, a demand was raised for inclusion of Bengal, Assam and Hyderabad in the proposed State. Mr. Jinnah declared that the Muslims would not be able to live with honour and safety in a Hindu-majority India. A separate State must, therefore, be established for them. His view was that two separate nations cannot hope to preserve their separate identities within the compass of a single State. The Congress leaders could not naturally accept this view and tried their best to preserve Hindu-Muslim unity. But Mr. Jinnah's tactics made the demand for Pakistan increasingly stronger. In 1940 the Muslim League formulated its formal demand for Pakistan at Lahore. The British were responsive to Mr. Jinnah's demand because they hoped to weaken the Congress by isolating the Muslims from it.

The declaration of war by Japan against England and

America (December, 1941) and its occupation of the East Indies, Malaya, Burma etc. made the political problems in India more complex. In the first half of 1942 an attack on

India by Japan was a strong possibility. In this hour of crisis for Britain, the English Cabinet sent the Cripps Mission (led by Sir Stafford Cripps) to India with a view to securing the whole-hearted support of the Indian people in the prosecution of the war. The proposals which the Mission placed before the people of India did not recognise full independence of the country. The essence of the proposals was that so long as the war continued India would remain virtually under the control of England; after the end of the war the Indian people could frame a Constitution for themselves.

The Congress was then left with no alternative but to launch a direct struggle against British rule. In August, 1942, at a meeting in Bombay, the Congress leaders resolved to oppose the British Government. Mahatma Gandhi had declared that the establishment of peace in India required the withdrawal of the British from the country.

'Quit India' Movement

But before any action could be taken on it Mahatma Gandhi and other Congress leaders were arrested. The people, leaderless but angry and resentful, tried in various ways to paralyse the Government machinery. The 'Quit India' movement developed into the 'August Revolt'. It assumed a particularly intense form in Midnapore in Bengal, Satara in Bombay and some places in North India. The Governor-General, Lord Linlithgow, tried to put it down with the police and the army. The question of administrative reforms hung in the air.

In June, 1944, Lord Wavell, the successor of Lord Linlithgow, brought new proposals for resolving the political deadlock and released the Congress leaders. The Wavell Plan

main purpose of these proposals was to include the national leaders in the Executive Council of the Governor-General with a view to resolving the Congress-League difference. The differences between the Rightists and the Leftists inside

the Congress had been widening for several years. The leader of the Left, Subhas Chandra Bose, had resigned as Congress President in 1939 and formed a new party known as 'Forward Bloc'. In 1941 he left India secretly with a view to achieving Indian independence by fighting the British with German and Japanese help. In 1943 he formed the Indian National Army at Singapore. This National Army advanced up to the eastern frontier of Assam. But the defeat of Japan shattered its prospects of success and news came of Subhas Chandra's death in a reported air-crash. The chiefs of the Indian National Army became prisoners of the victorious British army. In 1945-46 they were tried in the Red Fort at Delhi on charges of disloyalty to the British. The story of the valour of the Indian National Army created a new fervour all over India. There was a revolt in the Indian Navy in 1946. Government circles became extremely suspicious of the loyalty of the Indian soldiers.

Meanwhile, the Second World War had come to an end as a result of the surrender of the Germans in May and that of the Japanese in August (1945). Then the General Election in England returned a Labour majority and its leader, Mr. Attlee, who had some sympathy for India, formed the Cabinet. In March, 1946, under instructions from the Labour Cabinet, Lord Pethick-Lawrence, the Secretary of State for India, and two other members of the Cabinet, Sir Stafford Cripps and Mr. A. V. Alexander, arrived in India and assisted by Lord Wavell; the Governor-General, held discussions with the leaders of the different political parties on the question of the future Constitution of India. This time also the Congress and the Muslim League agreed only to disagree. Then the Cabinet Mission issued its own proposals (16th May, 1946) on the future administrative set-up of India. Some of the principles governing the future Constitution of India were enunciated. A Constituent Assembly was to frame this Constitution and in the transitional period an Interim Government was to function with the co-operation of the Indian leaders. The

Cabinet Mission
Plan

Congress accepted the plan, while the Muslim League first accepted and then rejected it. Pandit Nebru formed the Interim Government with the nominees of the Congress (September 2, 1946). After some time, five members nominated by the Muslim League joined the Interim Government. On December 9, 1946, the Constituent Assembly began its session at Delhi, but it was boycotted by the Muslim League.

The Congress had an absolute majority in the Constituent Assembly, and as such, there was no possibility of its accepting the communal demands of the Muslim League. Though the Cabinet Mission Plan proposed a large measure of autonomy for the provinces, it gave no countenance to the demand for division of India. The Cabinet Mission was in favour of a Constitution which would not jeopardize Indian unity, but which would, at the same time, allow the Muslims the maximum of autonomy. Mr. Jinnah at first accepted this Plan of the Cabinet Mission, but within a very short period proposed

'Direct Action' against it. The 'Direct Action' Muslim League's 'Direct Action' took the form of a terrible communal riot in Calcutta on the 16th August 1946. Later, the

Hindus in Noakhali and Tipperah districts of East Bengal became the victims of communal frenzy. This had its inevitable reaction in Bihar, Bombay and U.P. In the early months of 1947 riots began in the Punjab. Thus practically the whole of North India was ablaze with communal fury due to the chain reaction let loose by the demand for Pakistan. Even in the midst of such horrible massacres, negotiations were continuing. The Congress and the Muslim League could not agree in their interpretation of the Cabinet Mission's proposals.

The stage was thus set for the inevitable. The British Government agreed to a division of India. In March, 1947,

Lord Mountbatten came to India as the Division of India Governor-General in place of Lord Wavell. On the 3rd June, 1947, he published what is known

as the 'Mountbatten Plan'. It was accepted by both the Congress and the League. Freedom, the dream of the millions over the generations, was now a reality, but only at the frightful

cost of the division of the motherland. The Punjab, Bengal, and Assam were divided. Pakistan was born, comprising North-West Frontier Province, Baluchistan, Sind, West Punjab and East Bengal (including a part of Sylhet in Assam). The rest of British India retained its former name of 'India'. In July, 1947, the British Parliament passed the Indian Independence

Independence
of India

Act. In terms of this Act, India and Pakistan became 'Dominions' within the British Empire from the 15th August, 1947. Both the States

were fully self-governing units. Neither the British Parliament nor the British Cabinet had any controlling power over them. The King of England remained the 'King' of the two Dominions only in name. Both the States were at complete liberty to sever their relations with the British Empire at any time, should they choose to do so. India became a Republic on the 26th January, 1950.

Epilogue : Free India : After attainment of independence the Congress formed Ministries at the Centre as well as in all the provinces of India. Pandit Nehru became the Prime Minister at the Centre.

On the 30th January, 1948, Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation, fell a victim to an assassin's bullets at New Delhi.

Model Questions :

1. Assess the importance of Mahatma Gandhi's role in the history of India's Freedom Movement. Why is he called 'Father of the Nation'?
 2. Write short notes on :—(a) Non-co-operation Movement ; (b) Civil Disobedience Movement ; (c) Khilafat Movement ; (d) Simon Commission.
 3. Give a brief summary of the Government of India Act, 1935.
 4. Why did the Cripps Plan, the Wavell Plan and the Cabinet Mission Plan fail to satisfy India's political aspirations?
 5. Narrate the circumstances leading to the partition of India.
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CHAPTER 36

Religion, Society, Arts and Literature

Religion : In the 19th century India witnessed a new spirit of awakening in the religious sphere. Raja Ram Mohan Roy introduced the Brahmo faith, based on the Upanishads, in protest against the various superstitions associated with traditional Hindu religion. After his death *Maharshi* Devendranath Tagore and *Brahmananda* Keshabchandra Sen inspired the Brahmo faith with a new spirit and a new force. The faith may be regarded as a sophisticated form of Hinduism. Many Bengali intellectuals of the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries were either Brahmos themselves or admirers of the faith. Outside Bengal the Brahmo faith spread to Orissa, Madras, the Punjab and other provinces. This monotheistic faith was able to a great extent to resist the influence of Christianity over the educated classes. It also became the vehicle of fresh ideas of social reform.

Paramahansa Ramakrishna exercised a unique influence over the religious life in Bengal in the second half of the 19th century. He was born in 1833 and passed away in 1886. In family life his name was Gadadhar Chattopadhyaya. He was a Brahmin with little education in the usual sense. But his deep spiritual meditations revealed to him the essence of all religions and all scriptures. His teachings laid particular emphasis on the fusion of the different views on religion. He not only unified the doctrines of the *Saktas*, the *Vaishnavas* and other sects of Hinduism : he was able to make clear in his inimitably simple way the fundamental unity of Hinduism, Islam and Christianity. He drew the attention of the people to the spiritual heritage of India. His teachings made the Bengalees spiritually self-sustaining. The spiritual awareness based on the fusion of religions lent a new emotional fervour to nationalism.

The chief disciple of Paramahansa Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda (in family life, Narendra Nath Dutta), was born in 1862 and passed away in 1902. He lent a new vision not only to India, but to America and Europe as well about the unique position of India in the spheres of religion and culture. The fervent speech which he delivered about the religion of India in the World Religious Conference held at Chicago in the U.S.A. in 1897 attracted the attention of the entire Western world. He set up a new example in the sphere of social service. His main teaching was the unity of the whole of Indian society irrespective of race or religion.

In the 20th century, Sri Aurobindo was the greatest embodiment and exponent of Indian spiritualism. Well-educated in Western learning, Aurobindo Ghose, the savant, was an active fighter for India's freedom in early life. Later, he set up his *Asrama* at Pondicherry, then in French India, and devoted his time to spiritual contemplation. He believed that man can achieve Godhood through meditation. As a leader of the nascent national movement, as a literary figure and as a guide to the Life Divine, Sri Aurobindo is one of the creators of the 20th century Indian history.

Social changes after Sepoy Revolt : In the second half of the 19th century import of varied foreign goods in considerable quantities had introduced many changes in the tastes and social customs of the Indian people. The western way of living made its impact on India; the Indian society became more prone to luxury than before. The western habits considerably weakened the traditional outlook. The spread of western education on a large scale must be mentioned in this connection. Western literature, philosophy and science made a revolutionary impact on the outlook of educated Indians. Though this revolutionary change was mainly confined to the urban areas, the orthodox society centred round the villages did not altogether escape this new breath from the western world.

Western
influence

In the second half of the 19th century some religious organisations were particularly active in the sphere of social reforms in different provinces of India. Of these, the role of the Brahmo

Samaj was clearly the most outstanding. The Social reforms

Brahmo leaders were in the front rank in regard to reform movements such as abolition of the caste system, introduction of widow remarriage and intercaste marriage, prohibition of child marriage, spread of female education and abolition of *purda* (seclusion of women), though it was Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar who really initiated the movement for widow remarriage. Under the influence of the Brahmo Samaj, the 'Prarthana Samaj' of Maharashtra led the movements for widow remarriage and inter-caste marriage, for abolition of untouchability etc. in Western India. In North India, particularly in the Punjab, the 'Arya Samaj' founded by Swami Dayananda Saraswati organised public opinion against traditional evils like the caste system, child marriage, the taboo in respect of the crossing of the seas etc. A special feature of the Arya Samaj is its opening of the doors of Hinduism to non-Hindus after they have been duly purified. The 'Harijan' movement started by Mahatma Gandhi paved the way to social and economic progress of the so-called untouchables.

Nationalism in literature : In the 19th century there was an upsurge in Bengali literature never known before. The first half of the century witnessed the rise of Bengali prose. Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Maharshi Devendranath Tagore, Akshoy Kumar Datta and Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar gave it a mature form. In the field of poetry Michael Madhusudan Dutta introduced blank verse in Bengali literature. He rose to the stature of a great poet by composing the *Meghnadbadh Kavya*. In Bengali drama he is one of the pioneers.

One of the main features of the literature of this period is its spirit of nationalism. The agony and the humiliation of dependence found stirring expression in Michael's poems. The poet, Rangalal Bandyopadhyaya, gave vent to a similar feeling in his poetical work, *Padmini Upakhyan*. The *Britrasamhara* kavya of Hemchandra Bandyopadhyaya shows flashes of

nationalism in the guise of allegory. *Palasir Yuddha* composed by Nabinchandra Sen is a tearful homage to the sun of freedom setting over the battlefield of Plassey.

It was, however, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya who was the greatest exponent of nationalism in literature. He was one of the first graduates of the Calcutta University and a Deputy Magistrate in Government service. He was familiar with European literature and political thinking. He had profound respect for Hindu religion and culture. *Bande Mataram*, the song which so vigorously expresses the spirit of Indian nationalism, occurs in his novel *Anandamath*. Throughout the period of the national movement this stirring song inspired the people of India with a sense of destiny.

In the poems and songs of Rabindranath Tagore nationalism found a different and sweeter expression. The National Anthem of free India, *Janaganamana Adhinayaka*, is his gift to the Indian people. In poetry, drama, short story, novel, essay—in fact, in all branches of literature—his magnificent genius made equally facile contributions and elevated Bengali literature to the stature of world literature.

Nationalism in Arts : As in literature, so also in art, nationalism found creative expression. Mr. Havell, the Principal of Art School in Calcutta, and Abanindranath Tagore fused the old Indian style in art with that of the modern period. The paintings of Abanindranath are the finest expressions of the artistic genius of modern India. Gaganendranath Tagore, Nandalal Bose and other artists associated with Santiniketan firmly established the influence of the ancient Indian style in painting. In the field of architecture, however, new India has not followed the traditional Indian style but has preferred to imbibe the new style of the West.

Model Question :

Describe social and cultural developments in India in the post-Mutiny period.

APPENDIX

(A) Governors, Governors-General and Viceroys in the British Period

(i) Governors of Bengal

Robert Clive	...	...	...	1757-60
Vansittart	...	...	...	1760-64
(Lord) Robert Clive (2nd time)	...	...	...	1764-67
Verelst	...	...	...	1767-69
Cartier	...	...	...	1769-72
Warren Hastings	...	...	...	1772-74

(ii) Governors-General of Bengal

(Appointed under the Regulating Act, 1773.)

Warren Hastings	...	...	...	1774-85
Sir John Macpherson (offg.)	...	...	...	1785-86
Lord Cornwallis	...	...	...	1786-93
Sir John Shore	...	...	...	1793-98
Lord Wellesley	...	...	...	1798-1805
Lord Cornwallis (2nd time)	...	...	...	1805
Sir George Barlow (offg.)	...	...	...	1805-07
Earl of Minto I	...	...	...	1807-13
Marquess of Hastings	...	...	...	1813-23
Lord Amherst	...	...	...	1823-28
Lord William Bentinck	...	...	...	1828-33

(iii) Governors-General of India

(Appointed under Charter Act, 1833.)

Lord William Bentinck	...	...	...	1833-35
Sir Charles Metcalf (offg.)	...	...	...	1835-36
Lord Auckland	...	...	...	1836-42
Lord Ellenborough	...	...	...	1842-44
Lord Hardinge I	...	...	...	1844-48
Lord Dalhousie	...	...	...	1848-56
Lord Canning	...	...	...	1856-58

(iv) Governors-General and Viceroys

(Appointed under the Queen's Proclamation and Government of India Act, 1858)

Lord Canning	...	...	...	1858-62
Lord Elgin I	...	...	...	1862-64
Sir John Lawrence	...	...	...	1864-69
Earl of Mayo	...	...	...	1869-72
Lord Northbrook	...	—	...	1872-76
Lord Lytton	...	...	...	1876-80
Lord Ripon	...	...	...	1880-84
Lord Dufferin...	...	...	...	1884-88
Lord Lansdowne	...	...	...	1888-94
Lord Elgin II	...	...	...	1894-99
Lord Curzon	...	...	...	1899-1905
Lord Minto II	...	...	...	1905-10
Lord Hardinge II	...	...	...	1910-16
Lord Chelmsford	...	...	...	1916-21
Lord Reading	...	...	...	1921-25
Lord Irwin	...	...	...	1925-31
Lord Willingdon	...	...	...	1931-36
Lord Linlithgow	...	...	...	1936-43
Lord Wavell	...	...	...	1943-47
Lord Mountbatten	...	...	...	1947

(v) Governors-General

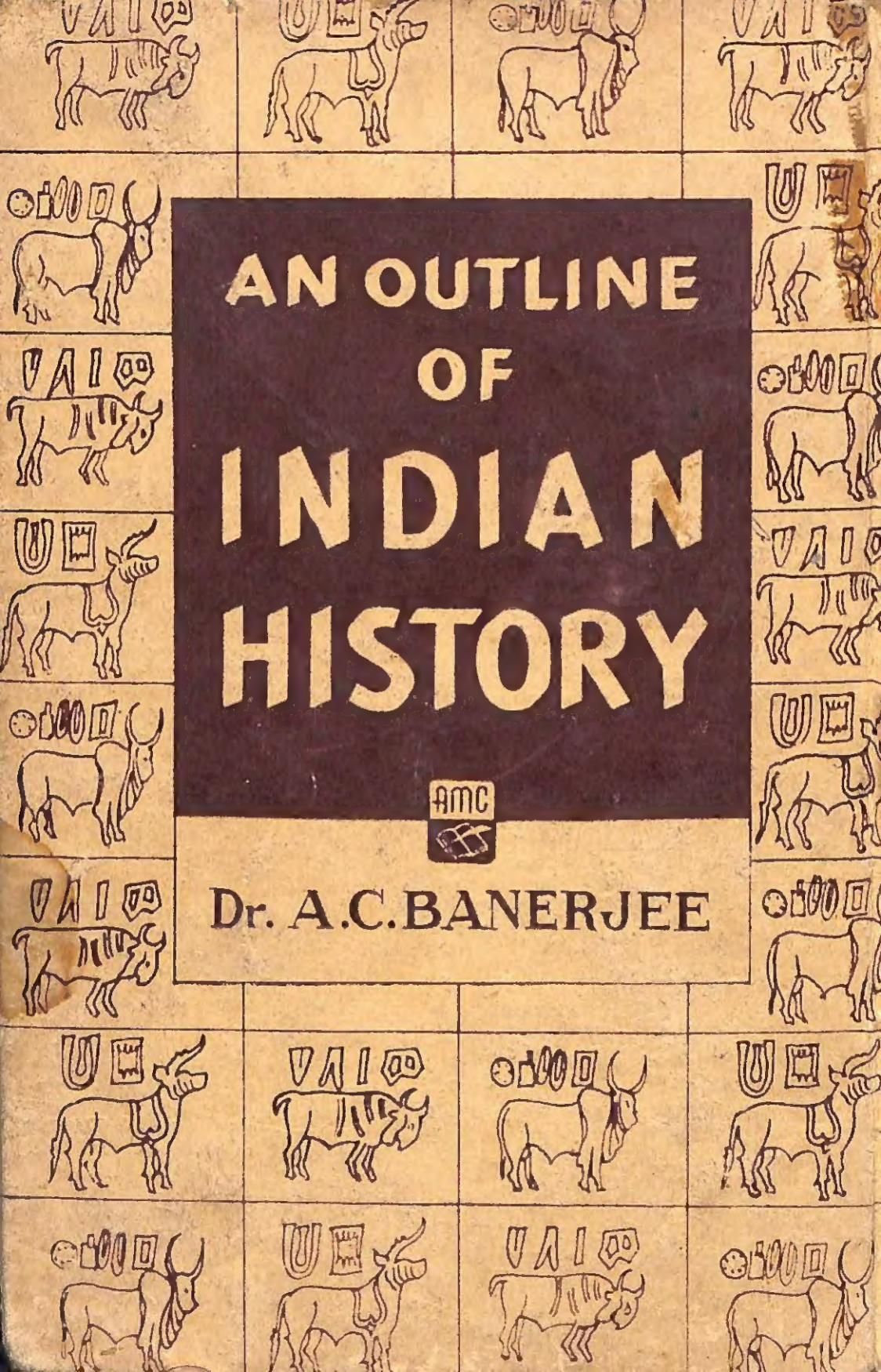
(Appointed under the Indian Independence Act, 1947.)

Lord Mountbatten	...	...	...	1947-48
Chakravarti Rajagopalachari	...	...	...	1948-50

(B) Presidents of India

(Elected under the Constitution of India)

Dr. Rajendra Prasad	...	...	...	1950-62
Dr. Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan	...	...	...	1962-
Dr. Zakir Hussain	...	...	...	1967-69
Shri V. V. Giri	...	...	...	1969-

The book cover features a decorative border composed of a grid of squares. Each square contains a stylized line drawing of a cow or bull, facing right. The drawings are arranged in a repeating pattern around the central title area.

AN OUTLINE OF INDIAN HISTORY



Dr. A.C. BANERJEE